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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Sunday, January 3, 2021, at 10 a.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2021

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Sovereign Lord, we thank You for the dawning of a New Year, for the promise of fresh starts and fertile opportunities. We sing Your praises and will not keep silent for You are God forever. We see changes and decay all around us, but You are God forever. Although the wrong so often seems strong, You are God forever.

Mighty One, abide in this Chamber to inspire and empower our lawmakers to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies. May our Senators strive to permit their thoughts, words, and actions to please You.

Oh God, our refuge and redeemer, You are God forever. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). The majority leader is recognized.

JUST AND UNIFYING SOLUTIONS TO INVIGORATE COMMUNITIES EVERYWHERE ACT OF 2020—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985, a bill to improve and reform policing practices, accountability and transparency.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The majority leader.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, first I want to wish all my fellow Senators and our staff colleagues here in the Capitol a happy and healthy new year. In particular, I would like to extend our gratitude to the Capitol Police, offices of the Secretary of the Senate and the Sergeant at Arms, and the many other staff who have gone above and beyond to help us attend to important business this holiday season.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Today, by the grace of God, the genius of science, and the resilience of the American people,

we appear to have a bright 2021 on the horizon. Our great Nation is poised to defeat this pandemic in the months ahead through safe and effective vaccines.

The pace of the American people's economic recovery has already beaten expectations and predictions. Thanks to the ingenuity of our citizens and historic relief policies from Congress, overall personal income in our country is already higher now than it was prior to the pandemic.

Now, the country needs more support, and the significant remaining pain is not—I repeat, not—evenly distributed, far from it. So we just enacted another historic \$900 billion rescue package to get vaccines distributed, to keep small businesses alive, and to get a whole lot more targeted support to struggling people who actually need it. From multiple kinds of extra Federal unemployment benefits to nutrition assistance, rental assistance, direct cash, and beyond.

This latest, huge, historic package was just signed into law less than 1 week ago. It is beginning to take effect right now. Many households have already received the latest round of direct cash, or will receive it very soon, to help them turn the page into this brand new year.

While this huge new aid package takes effect, a bipartisan, common-sense caucus in both Chambers is not keen to let Speaker PELOSI and Senator SANDERS rush to borrow half a trillion dollars for universal cash giveaways, regardless of need. A huge chunk would essentially be socialism for rich people—money flowing to

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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households earning well into six figures who did not lose any jobs or income last year.

The House Democrats' bill is just simply not the right approach. That is what editorial pages across the political spectrum say. That is what even liberal economists say. And that is what common sense tells us.

Here is what the Senate is focused on: completing the annual Defense legislation that looks after our brave men and women who volunteer to wear the uniform. We passed this legislation 59 years in a row and, one way or another, we are going to complete the 60th annual NDAA and pass it into law before this Congress concludes on Sunday.

It is a serious responsibility, but it is also a tremendous opportunity to direct our national security priorities to reflect the resolve of the American people and the evolving threats to their safety at home and abroad. It is our chance to recommit to research and development so that our 21st century military is equipped to outmatch any adversary. It is our chance to ensure that we keep pace with competitors like Russia and China. It is our chance to remind brave servicemembers and their families that we have their backs with facilities, resources, and support benefiting the finest fighting forces in the world.

Over the past year, our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee have made sure the legislation delivers for our troops and for our Nation. Now it is time for us to deliver this bill.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 9051

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, well, I can't remember the last time the Senate convened on New Year's Day. I want to take this opportunity to wish all of my colleagues a happy new year. I want to thank the staff for having to come into work on New Year's Day, and I want to bid good riddance to 2020.

There can be no question that last year was a horrible year—as they have said in Britain, an “*annus horribilis*.” But as we begin the first year of this new decade, preparing to inaugurate a new President and inoculate the country against this virus, the American people have reason to hope.

The Senate can start off this new year by adding to that sense of hope by sending \$2,000 checks to struggling American families. The Senate can start off 2021 by really helping the American people. We can start off 2021 by sending \$2,000 checks to struggling American families to carry them through the darkest and final days of this pandemic.

The votes today, on this uncommon New Year's Day session, could be the

last of the 116th Congress. That means that today is the last chance to take up and pass the House bill to provide \$2,000 checks to the American people. If the Senate does not take action today, \$2,000 checks will not become law before the end of Congress, and they will know that Leader MCCONNELL and the Republican majority have prevented them from getting the checks, plain and simple.

This is the last chance—the last chance for a mother in Nashville, \$4,000 behind on the rent, whose water was shut off earlier this month. This is the last chance—the last chance for the medical receptionist in Macomb, \$2,100 behind on the rent, whose electricity was shut off in September, on her son's third day of virtual kindergarten. The kid can't go to school. This is the last chance for 12 million Americans who have fallen nearly \$6,000 behind on rent and utility or the 26 million Americans who have had trouble putting food on the table—the last chance.

Make no mistake about it, \$600 has never been enough for them. This is the last chance to deliver \$2,000 before a new Congress is sworn in and the legislative process must start all over again.

For once, we have progressive Democrats, conservative Republicans, the President himself, and not to mention the majority—the vast majority—of the American people singing from the same songbook in support of these checks. We have a bill that has already passed the House.

All we are asking for is a simple vote in the Senate. I, for one, am confident it would pass if given the chance, and that may be the real reason that Leader MCCONNELL and the Republicans don't want to bring it up. We have had many opportunities this week to vote on the measure. Senator MCCONNELL has blocked every one of them.

We have offered to vote on whatever unrelated issues the Republican leader says he wants to vote on, so long as we can get a clean vote on the House bill to provide \$2,000 checks—the only way to actually make it happen in this year, in this session of Congress. That offer still stands. That offer still stands. But give us a vote. Give us a vote on the House bill.

It is OK if the Republican leader opposes checks. It is OK if the majority of Republican Senators oppose the checks. They can make their case to the American people and oppose the bill, but let us vote. It is OK if the Republican leader wants to call direct assistance to American people “poorly targeted” and “socialism for the rich,” even after he drove the passage of a \$2 trillion across-the-board reduction in corporate taxes. But give us a vote. Make the argument. Let the Senate work its will.

To me, it seems like the Republican leader is afraid to schedule a vote on \$2,000 checks because he is afraid it will pass. What a terrifying thought that struggling Americans would get some

money to feed their families, pay the rent, and get on with their lives; pay the utility bill of that kindergarten kid or third grade kid who can't even go to school because his family can't afford electricity.

We have a chance—a chance at the end of this painful year and at the beginning of a new one—to give Americans reason for hope in 2021. The only thing standing in the way right now is Leader MCCONNELL and the Republican Senate majority.

In a moment, I will ask consent for the final time that the Senate set a time for a vote on the House bill to provide \$2,000 checks. I have done it every day this week. This is it, the last chance for the 116th Congress to pass \$2,000 checks and to say to regular Americans: “Help is on the way.”

Let's have a vote. Let's have a vote. Pass this bill. There is no better way to usher in the new year.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 645, H.R. 9051, a bill to increase recovery rebate amounts to \$2,000 per individuals; that the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage; and if passed, that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The assistant majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—and let me say, through the Chair, thank you to the Senator from New York and the Senator from Vermont, the Senator from Illinois, and others here for the opportunity to spend New Year's with them. I know that has always been something that has been on my bucket list—maybe not on top of the bucket list. But, nevertheless, thank you for that opportunity. It does feel like a long time ago, but it was, actually, only—if you can believe this—the beginning of last week when both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol came together to pass a targeted, responsible, and necessary relief package, which became law with overwhelming bipartisan support. It passed here in the Senate 92 to 6. Members on both sides of the aisle, myself included, have demonstrated that we are willing to dedicate resources to those who are struggling during this pandemic.

The problem with what is being put forward—the House-passed CASH Act—is that it is not targeted to help those who are the most in need. I will just point out that it is not just our saying that; even the Washington Post editorial board called it “one last bad idea” for 2020. It singled out as “especially wrongheaded” the efforts of the progressive left to depict this “as aid to ‘desperate’ Americans despite the huge amounts”—this is the Washington Post's term—“destined for perfectly comfortable families.”

As others here on the floor have noted, the bill would provide a payment to a family of five making up to \$350,000. A family of five making \$250,000 would receive a \$5,000 benefit. Just to put that in perspective, that is more than was paid to a middle-class family of five under the CARES Act that we passed back in March. In addition, the bill would add an additional \$463 billion—nearly half a trillion dollars—to the annual debt.

Again, it is all money we have to borrow. All of this is money we have to borrow, and that is more than the first two economic impact payments combined. Put that in perspective, and think of other ways you could use that amount of money. The truth is that those types of sums could potentially be spent in many more targeted ways, but our colleagues on the Democratic side don't even want to debate some of those alternatives.

Allowing small businesses a second draw from the Paycheck Protection Program would cost, approximately, \$285 billion. For the cost of the CASH Act, we could do another round of assistance to help small businesses keep their employees on the payrolls and still have almost \$200 billion left over. The expanded unemployment benefits—signed into law last week—will cost approximately \$120 billion for 11 additional weeks. That means, for the same cost as this proposal, we could provide an additional 40 weeks—10 months—of enhanced unemployment insurance benefits to those who have lost their jobs.

This is simply not targeted relief for the people who need it the most, and those who say that we should just vote on this flawed House bill conveniently leave out the fact that they do not want us to amend it to make it better in order to deliver more assistance to the people who are hurting the most.

Again, I will just point out one last time that it has been less than a week, really, since the Senate voted and the President signed into law a proposal negotiated, literally, over months. Every fine point of that proposal was negotiated, and it was signed into law to provide targeted, fiscally responsible assistance to the people of this country who need it the most. This proposal is a shotgun approach, where a rifle makes a lot more sense.

If you really want to help people who need this the most, at a time when we are running a \$26 trillion debt and are borrowing every penny that we are making available to do this, we ought to sit down and figure out how to do it in the most efficient, effective, targeted way possible. This, absolutely, does not do that. When you have a family who is making \$350,000 a year in this country getting up to thousands of dollars of payments and a family making \$250,000 a year in this country getting, under this proposal, a \$5,000 check, I would argue that it is not targeted, that it is not fiscally responsible, that it is not efficient, and that

it is not an effective way to spend the American taxpayers' dollars.

Let's help the people who need it the most. We just passed and signed into law a proposal that does that. I think many of us on this side of the aisle are willing to look at other ideas and things that we could do that would help these people more, but this is certainly not it, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority—excuse me. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Someday soon.

(Laughter.)

Mr. President, the only thing I would say, through the Chair, to my friend from South Dakota is that the many proposals he proposed as alternatives to our proposal are those to which the Republican majority objected when we had our negotiations on the CARES bill. We believe this can be in addition to the expansion of unemployment insurance and other things. Given the state of the economy, that is what is needed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 9051 AND S. 5085

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me say to my friend, Senator THUNE, that I certainly concur with you as to what a pleasure it is to be spending New Year's Day with you and our colleagues. It is exactly what I, I know, and every other Member here wanted to do, but here we are because we have to be here. We are here because, back home in my State and all over this country, millions and millions of families are struggling to put food on the table. They are struggling to pay their rent. They are struggling to come up with the money they need to go to the doctor.

This hits me, in a sense, in a personal way. The other day, I received a letter from a colleague of mine in Burlington, VT, where I live—the largest city in the State of Vermont, all of 40,000 people. He wrote to me, reporting on a food drive in Burlington, VT, where I live:

Over 30 volunteers showed up to the Champlain School to help bag groceries and to hand them out to those who came out. Unfortunately, there was not nearly enough donated food to provide a bag to everyone who showed up despite us planning on an increased need. The line of cars filled the parking lot, wrapped around the school, and went out onto the main road for half a mile. This represented a major up-tick for the October event that we were involved in.

This was in Burlington, VT, with hundreds of cars lining up for emergency food and the volunteers not having enough food to distribute. They had to say to the families who were trying to feed their kids: Sorry. We do not have enough food.

So what we are doing today is very simple, and that is that Senator

THUNE, Senator MCCONNELL, and others have raised objection to the House-passed bill. In the U.S. Senate, when we have differences of opinion, what we should be doing is debating that bill. So all that Senator SCHUMER is asking and all that I am asking is simple: Bring the bill to the floor. We are not even asking you to vote for it. Bring the bill to the floor. On top of everything else, we need 60 votes to pass it—60 votes. Can we get 60 votes? I don't know. I think virtually all of the 48 Democrats will vote for it.

It means, Senator THUNE, that we need 12 Republicans. I gather we have one right here who indicated he would vote for it, and five or six others have been public about saying they will vote for it. Will we get the rest? I don't know. You don't know. What is the problem with giving Members of the U.S. Senate the opportunity to vote on the legislation? When we have that debate, you can come up and raise all of your objections, and we can debate it.

Now, I heard Senator THUNE and Senator MCCONNELL before him talk about this bill being socialism for the rich, which I have to tell you I find somewhat hysterical because that is an issue I have been talking about for many, many years. I am very delighted that my conservative Republican friends now recognize that we do have socialism for the rich. To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he said we live in a society where we have socialism for the rich and rugged individualism for the poor. King was right.

Despite what my Republican colleagues are saying, the truth is that, according to the Tax Policy Center, the top 5 percent of Americans—the wealthiest people in our country—would receive less than 1 percent of the benefits of these direct payments—less than 1 percent. It doesn't sound, to me, like too much socialism for the rich.

While we are on the subject of socialism for the rich, which my Republican friends have suddenly become very concerned about, let me talk about the Trump tax proposal that was pushed very hard by Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership and that, I think, every Republican voted for. Do you want to talk about socialism for the rich? It is not the bill that puts \$2,000 into working-class hands all over this country. That isn't socialism for the rich. This is socialism for the rich. In that bill, Amazon—oh, by the way, I must say this, if I may: We were quoting the liberal Washington Post, owned by Jeff Bezos—the wealthiest guy in the world. So here is Jeff Bezos' company, Amazon, and they received a tax rebate. They paid nothing in 2018 in Federal taxes. That is a corrupt tax system to begin with, but then, on top of that, they received \$129 million as a tax rebate.

That, Senator THUNE, is socialism for the rich. In fact, this particular company is owned by the richest guy in the world, and you gave him a \$129 million rebate, but it is not just Amazon.

Delta Air Lines also paid nothing in Federal taxes in 2018; yet they received a \$187 million rebate from that particular bill. Chevron, in helping to destroy our planet with their carbon emissions, received \$181 million in a rebate.

That, my friends, is what socialism for the rich is about. Socialism for the rich is not—in the midst of this terrible pandemic—putting \$2,000 checks into the hands of working families.

The truth of the matter is, as a result of this pandemic, we are living through the worst and most difficult economic period since the Great Depression. Tens of millions of families are facing eviction all over this country—in the wealthiest Nation on Earth. Moms are struggling to feed their kids, keep the electricity on, and be able to go to the doctor.

Now, I hear from my Republican friends that the economy is doing better, but I would like to just read to them a few of the stories that I have received in my office. We asked people a simple question: How are you doing out there, and what is going on in your lives? We received many, many thousands of responses from people in every State in this country. I will read a few just to bring some dose of reality here to the U.S. Senate, which often, in the midst of all of the campaign contributions coming in from the rich, does not know what is going on in the real world.

Here is the real world.

A gentleman in Texas wrote:

\$2,000 is the difference between keeping our apartment and being evicted.

A mother in Virginia wrote:

\$2,000 means I can afford to feed my three kids.

Now, maybe we should give her a long lecture on macroeconomics and how well the stock market is doing, but all she is worried about is feeding her three children.

A woman in Wisconsin wrote:

\$2,000 would mean not having to choose between rent and groceries and not having to ration my partner's meds.

A woman in Nevada wrote:

[It means] paying my rent and getting life-saving treatment because I can't afford the \$50 co-pay through my work insurance just to see my neurologist right now.

A father in Florida wrote:

It would mean I could pay my bills. My electricity and phone are about to get shut off. I didn't have money for my son on Christmas, and I won't have money for his birthday on January 2.

A father in New Jersey wrote:

It would mean I could pay off credit card debt accumulated during this pandemic, feed my children, and pay my bills.

A parent in Massachusetts wrote:

It would mean that I could pay my rent and electricity and put food on the table.

A woman in Missouri wrote:

It would mean getting out of crushing debt. It would mean survival without daily fear.

Someone in Texas wrote:

It would mean I could actually put food in the fridge.

A man in Maryland wrote:

It would mean I don't have to beg or go without food, shelter, and medicine. It would mean my family stays warm another couple of months and my dad gets proper treatment.

Mr. DURBIN. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SANDERS. I would.

Mr. DURBIN. I would like to ask a question of the Senator from Vermont through the Chair.

I have listened to the Republican analysis of the bill, which you and Senator SCHUMER are asking for a vote on. It is a bill which passed the House and would give \$2,000, basically, in allotments or payments to families across America, with certain income restrictions.

And I have heard from the other side of the aisle, repeatedly, that this is socialism for the rich, that this is fundamentally unfair, and that we should do things in a targeted way. That is the argument that is made over and over again.

And reference has been made repeatedly to the COVID-19 bill that passed last week with 92 votes, including many of the Republicans—virtually all of them. Not all of them but virtually all of them.

And so that bill, if I remember correctly, had a \$600 payment included in the bill, and I asked my staff: Would you please analyze the formula for distributing the \$600 and compare to it the formula for the \$2,000, which is part of our bill.

And lo and behold, they discovered it is the same formula. So if there is some fundamental, moral injustice in the distribution of these funds, then I am afraid all but six of the Republicans are guilty of the same immorality because they all voted for that formula last week when it was \$600 and now are scandalized by the notion that the same formula they voted for would be used for a \$2,000 payment.

I am sure I have missed something in the translation here. I would like to ask the Senator from Vermont to explain this faux outrage from the Republican side of the aisle.

Mr. SANDERS. Well, I think my friend from Illinois missed nothing in the translation. He is exactly right.

But I also—

Mr. THUNE. The Senator from Illinois makes a good point.

Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes.

Mr. THUNE. So if the same formula is used, and you are increasing the amount by \$1,400 per person—so you are going from, basically, for a family of four, what would be a \$2,400 payment to an \$3,800 payment, and you phase that down using the same formula, does the Senator from Illinois understand the math and why that skews toward people who make a lot more money than they would under the other formula?

Mr. DURBIN. If the question is directed toward me, I will answer it.

Mr. THUNE. Well, I just think that you are making a point in the statement which is not accurate because you are saying the formula is the same. The formula is the same, but the inputs change, and so the way it ramps down means that somebody who makes \$350,000 gets a payment under the Sanders-Hawley proposal that they wouldn't—but they wouldn't—no, and it phases out a lot sooner, as you know.

So let's be clear about how that formula works. You are misrepresenting the way that formula works.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has the floor.

Mr. SANDERS. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I would ask my friend from South Dakota: Do you disagree with the Tax Policy Center, which says that the top 5 percent of Americans—the wealthiest people in our country—would receive less than 1 percent of the total benefits being disbursed?

Mr. THUNE. I have not seen the Tax Policy Center, but I know math, and I know as a basic principle that when you stick bigger numbers in there and you are using the same formula to phase something out, you are going to make it available to people who make a lot more money. That is a mathematical fact.

And what you are saying, when you talk about the same formula, it skews entirely different in the income scale, and you know that.

And all I am saying is don't misrepresent the facts.

Mr. SANDERS. And all that I am saying is that, according to a very reputable tax center organization—people who do this for a living—less than 1 percent of the benefits of the entire program go to the wealthiest people in this country.

So when you are talking about trying to say: Oh my God, all of this money is going to the rich, that ain't really true.

But I would also ask my friend: When did you suddenly become a religious adherent about concerns of socialism for the rich, when you gave 83 percent of the benefits for the rich and large corporations in the tax bill that you supported? Where was your concern about socialism for the rich when Amazon—owned by the richest guy in the world—got a \$129 million tax rebate? I didn't hear much about socialism for the rich during that debate.

Mr. THUNE. Will the Senator from Vermont allow me to respond to that question?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes.

Mr. THUNE. Well, very simply, what you are suggesting—what you are saying here is that the owner of the Washington Post, who said this is really bad policy and shouldn't be done in this way at the end of this year—is that what you are saying? That because he is a wealthy person, that somehow that is why he is making that statement?

Mr. SANDERS. The wealthiest in the world.

Mr. THUNE. I think the Washington Post editorial board, in most cases, has been very sympathetic to the argument of the Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. That is factually inaccurate.

Mr. THUNE. In fact, they take a liberal point of view on almost every issue.

My point, very simply, is that we have a limited amount of resources. This is borrowed money, as the Senator from Vermont knows. And when we spent months—literally months—and you ask: Why can't you guys just come down here, why can't you just come down here and debate this, we tried for months to get the Democrats down here to debate a bill. We put a bill on the floor in September, we put a bill on the floor in October, a coronavirus relief bill, and you guys blocked it. You didn't even want to talk about it. You didn't want to have an opportunity to amend it.

We have been working at this for months, and we finally arrived, after months, at a proposal that helps people who need it the most, including nutrition assistance, including rental assistance, and including checks to people—

Mr. SANDERS. Reclaiming my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. All that I am saying—all that I am saying—this is a great debate, John. We should have this debate, and in 2 minutes—in 2 minutes, John, I am going to give you the opportunity to say you support what we are doing, and then we will have this debate. That is your opportunity.

But I want to get back—the Senator from South Dakota did not answer the question that it was not, apparently, a huge concern about socialism for the rich in the bill that they supported or worried about the debt that would incur.

So I see, if I may say so, a bit of hypocrisy here. Senator THUNE and the Republican leadership want to debate this issue, and so do I. I think it is a great debate—great debate.

Now, as everybody knows, Senator MCCONNELL proposed an idea. I don't agree with it, but it is an idea that is worthy of debate and discussion, and he said: Let's combine three elements together. Let's incorporate the bill passed in the House by two-thirds of the House, including 44 Republicans; let's add to that the repeal of section 230 of the Telecommunications Act; and let's also add to that, at President Trump's request, an issue about voter integrity, et cetera, et cetera.

OK. That is what Senator MCCONNELL proposed.

And in one moment, I am going to bring—because I know Republicans think I don't do much for them and I am not concerned about them—but, Senator THUNE, I am going to bring your bill to the floor. Show you what a nice guy I am. New year, I am going to

bring Senator MCCONNELL's bill right to the floor and give you an opportunity to vote for it.

All that I am asking, while I bring Senator MCCONNELL's Republican bill to the floor, we are going to bring the bill that passed the House, with 44 Republicans, to the floor as well.

We will have two votes: One vote on Senator MCCONNELL's bill, which needs 60 votes to pass; one vote on the House bill, 60 votes to pass. That is it.

So it is hard for me to imagine how Senator THUNE will object to us bringing forward the Republican bill.

Here it goes. This is the legalese that I need to say and I am going to bring it forth and I am sure that Senator THUNE will support me in my effort.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if cloture is invoked on the veto message on H.R. 6395, National Defense Authorization Act, that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 3 p.m. today—short period of time—3 p.m. today, Friday, January 1, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 645, H.R. 9051, to provide a \$2,000 direct payment to the working class; that the bill be considered read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill; and that if passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; further, that following the vote on H.R. 9051, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 644, S. 5085; that the bill be considered read a third time; that there be 1 hour of debate on the bill, equally divided and controlled by myself or my designee and Senator MCCONNELL or his designee; that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on passage of the bill; and that if passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I want to say that I can't, for the life of me, figure out why it is so difficult to get a vote on the bills that Senator SANDERS has just referenced, when, by my count, the President of the United States, the Speaker of the House, a large majority of the House of Representatives, and I think a supermajority of this body are all in favor—all in favor—of \$2,000 COVID relief payments to working Americans.

Now, we have had some back-and-forth on the floor today about how we got to the level of \$2,000. We all know how we got to that level. The President of the United States said that is the level he supported. The number originates with him. This is the number that he has asked for and the House adopted it and a majority of Senators have said already publicly that they support it.

And yet we can't seem to even get a vote on it. We can't even seem to have debate on it.

I mean, with all due respect, this doesn't seem, to me, to be a Republicans versus Democrats issue; this seems to be the Senate versus the United States of America and I just don't understand it and I am willing to bet—I am willing to bet that the American people don't understand it either.

I mean, here we are, in the throes of the worst pandemic in a century, that working people have borne the brunt of, and all that we are asking is that those working people be first in line for relief and that they be given meaningful relief that is only approximately commensurate with the hardships that they and their families have borne.

Now, I hear a lot of talk about how we can't afford it. I do notice, however, that we seem to be able to afford all kinds of other stuff. We can afford to send lots of money to other governments. We can afford to send all kinds of tax breaks and bailouts to big corporations. We can afford to spend enormous sums of money on pork—hundreds of billions of dollars in that last bill on pork—hundreds of billions. But we can't seem to find the money for relief for working people that the President and the House and the Senate all support, and yet we can't seem to get it onto the floor.

Let me just share three stories that I have heard just this week alone—this week alone—from my home State, from Missouri.

Danielle, from St. Louis County, called my office. She said her utilities are about to be shut off. She is desperate for help. She said a \$2,000 payment would go a long way to help keep the lights on and her house warm.

I heard from a mother in Southeast Missouri. That is the bootheel of my State. She wrote that her son had lost pay because of his company's cutting back hours because of COVID and that he himself had contracted the virus and so he had to be home and he was missing work, missing shifts. His family can't make it paycheck to paycheck. Her daughter-in-law is donating plasma in order to help earn some extra grocery money—donating plasma in order to get some money to pay for groceries to feed their family.

Richard from St. Louis wrote to me and said any extra help that he could get would go directly to paying his rent and his utilities. He had a job that he lost, in the retail business, the retail sector, and he is desperately struggling.

I would state to the Presiding Officer that these people are not ne'er-do-wells. These are working people. These are strong people. These are proud people. And all they ask for, as I have said many times on this floor before, is a chance to get back on their feet and to be able to provide for their families. And I can't for the life of me understand why we cannot get so much as a vote on these bills.

For that reason, Mr. President, I do not object. In fact, I enthusiastically support the measures that Senator

SANDERS is trying to bring to the floor, and I would vote for both if we were given the opportunity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I know Senator TOOMEY is delayed coming to the floor, and on his behalf, I will object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—VETO—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the veto message on H.R. 6395, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message, a bill (H.R. 6395) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, these are the last few words that Senator REED and I will say before the vote, and I want to mention something that I haven't talked about as much as I probably should have.

First of all, the cooperation and working with Senator REED and his staff—this is a long enduring thing. It is hard for people to believe, but we are actually starting on next year's bill now. We have already started.

I thought I would mention something that hasn't been talked about as much as it should have been talked about since we have suffered arguably the worst cyber attack in American history. This is the most significant piece of cyber legislation in American history. It contains 27 of our Cyberspace Solarium Commission recommendations. All 27 are in this NDAA, to include provisions that are directly relevant to the SolarWinds attack that would have allowed us to get ahead of this—most notably by allowing decisive cyber security measures in DHS to begin hunting for threats on dot-gov networks.

We have other recommendations to enhance our cyber resilience for our nuclear command and control systems in this NDAA. Establishing a national cyber director is in the NDAA, strengthening the size and elevating

his leadership, giving him more resources. I fear that the SolarWinds attack is a harbinger of things to come. I am very proud of the work our Commission has done, and the provisions are absolutely critical.

The final thing I would say is that this is arguably the most serious piece of legislation when it comes to deterring China that we have had in decades, if not ever, including provisions such as the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. This is kind of a followup to last year's European Deterrence Initiative, where we are concentrating more on Russia, but this is specific to China.

That is what the whole division of this bill is about—to enhance our presence and our deterrence posture in the INDOPACOM provisions for protecting against Chinese industrial espionage, more transparency for Chinese military companies, reporting on Chinese United Front Work Department in the United States and abroad, and the list goes on and on. It is a very serious piece of legislation when it comes to deterring China. That is one of the things we are concerned about. China is our No. 1 threat and will be for perhaps, regrettably, decades to come. So this bill brings us along to where we should be.

Once again, I want to say thanks for the effort that has gone into this bill, the weekends, the hard work. LIZ CHENEY and John Bonsell, I have to say, along with JACK REED—they probably worked more weekends than they have not worked weekends. So it has been a real effort.

It is the most important and significant piece of legislation that we will pass, and this next vote is a very critical vote.

I will yield to Senator REED for any comments he would like to make about this. Keep in mind that this is a real—people talk about how the Democrats and Republicans don't do things together. This has been an example of what can happen in government.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, let me first begin by commending the chairman for his extraordinary efforts. He led this process, let there be no mistake about it. He rose to the challenges. This is the most challenging NDAA for so many different reasons—because of the pandemic, the need for social distancing in terms of hearings, the whole scope of challenges that have arisen in the past few months—and the chairman has done a remarkable job.

Let me start by saying that this is essential for our national security. This bill is not optional. If we want to continue to maintain our security for the United States, we have to pass this legislation. It is that simple.

What does it do? Well, it does things that we have to do every year. One, it provides for the support of our service men and women. I know we are all celebrating New Year's Day here. It is kind of disconcerting to be working

when everyone else is partying, but if you feel a little bit put upon, think about the soldiers in forward operating bases in Afghanistan who are facing danger. Think about the ballistic submariners protecting the United States. Think about the airmen who flew the B-52 bombers. Think about them and their families, and I think you will appreciate more what they do every day and what we do once in a while.

One of the issues that the chairman spoke about is how cyber security is essential. We based our efforts on an insightful report by the Cyber Solarium Commission, headed by Senator ANGUS KING and Congressman MIKE GALLAGHER.

Every day, we are learning more about the Russian penetration of our whole national security apparatus and civilian companies. Just today, Microsoft announced that they have been deeply penetrated by the Russian intrusion, and I suspect it is very serious.

This legislation was done, remarkably, before we knew of such an intrusion and responds specifically to this type of cyber breach on the United States. It gives the Department of Homeland Security the authority to audit other agencies in terms of their cyber security and take other steps to hunt for threats. It is just the first step, but if we don't take this step, we will be further behind.

Now, the other thing I want to point out, too, is echoing what the chairman said about the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. We have identified \$2 billion that can be used—and we will focus upon how it is used—to create a new strategy. This is really the first time that we have stepped back and said: Let's set up a strategic posture that recognizes the true threats that China is now presenting to us in the Pacific. This is the first time we have done this.

What it does is it builds on our close relationships with key allies—Australia, Japan, South Korea. It does that by a series of steps—first, through command post exercises where we test our communications; second, real exercises. With these steps, we are building to a point where large-scale joint exercises involving not only our key allies but other partners become possible. That will set us up for the ability to deter China. When they see all of the nations of the Pacific that have worked with us closely and that are prepared to work with us, that will be a great deterrence. That is the goal of this effort. So any suggestion that China is happy about this bill is completely baseless.

Then finally, again, like the chairman, I must thank the staff, John Bonsell and Elizabeth King and the staff and all the Members. Again, my congratulations to the chairman for his great work.

I urge passage. Again, I think this is essential. As I said before, there are thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen who are

on the watch as we speak. It is our obligation to them to give them the tools they need to protect us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I suggest that this is the most significant bill we have passed in the last 59 years.

Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived with respect to the motion to invoke cloture on the veto message on H.R. 6395, the NDAA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the veto message on H.R. 6395, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, James M. Inhofe, Todd Young, John Cornyn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Braun, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Richard Burr, Pat Roberts, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitt Romney, Susan M. Collins, Richard C. Shelby, Thom Tillis, Lamar Alexander.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the veto message on H.R. 6395, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFFLER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 80, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 291 Leg.]

YEAS—80

Alexander	Feinstein	Reed
Baldwin	Fischer	Risch
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Roberts
Bennet	Grassley	Romney
Blackburn	Harris	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rounds
Blunt	Heinrich	Rubio
Boozman	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Hoeven	Schumer
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cantwell	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shaheen
Cardin	Kaine	Shelby
Carper	Kelly	Sinema
Casey	King	Smith
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	Menendez	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Udall
Daines	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wicker
Enzi	Peters	Young
Ernst	Portman	

NAYS—12

Booker	Lee	Sanders
Braun	Markey	Van Hollen
Hawley	Merkley	Warren
Kennedy	Paul	Wyden

NOT VOTING—8

Cotton	Graham	Perdue
Cruz	Jones	Sasse
Gardner	Loeffler	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 80, the nays are 12.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, we are going to go on to final passage, and I just want to make one comment that this is a really significant vote, not just because it is the NDAA and many of us contend, as I do, every year that the NDAA is the most significant vote that we have, but this year especially so in light of all the disruptions and problems that we have had.

Once again, I want to say how great it has been to work and show the American people that Democrats and Republicans can work together and get significant legislation passed. I am very proud that we had this bill, and I am proud to have worked with Senator REED and his staff.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, this legislation is central to the national security of the United States and to the welfare of the troops and their families who defend us every day.

I would urge all my colleagues to vote to override the veto.

I want to thank Senator INHOFE for his leadership and congratulate John Bonsell on the Republican side and Liz King on the Democratic side.

Again, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

VOTE ON H.R. 6395

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there any further debate?

If not, the question is, Shall the bill (H.R. 6395) pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding?

The yeas and nays are required under the Constitution.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFFLER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAWLEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 292 Leg.]

YEAS—81

Alexander	Feinstein	Reed
Baldwin	Fischer	Risch
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Roberts
Bennet	Grassley	Romney
Blackburn	Harris	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rounds
Blunt	Heinrich	Rubio
Boozman	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Hoeven	Schumer
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cantwell	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shaheen
Cardin	Kaine	Shelby
Carper	Kelly	Sinema
Casey	King	Smith
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	Menendez	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Udall
Daines	Murkowski	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Enzi	Peters	Wicker
Ernst	Portman	Young

NAYS—13

Booker	Kennedy	Sanders
Braun	Lee	Warren
Cotton	Markey	Wyden
Cruz	Merkley	
Hawley	Paul	

NOT VOTING—6

Gardner	Jones	Perdue
Graham	Loeffler	Sasse

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 81, the nays are 13.

Two-thirds of the Senators voting, a quorum being present and having voted in the affirmative, the bill on reconsideration is passed, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The Senator from Arkansas.

DRIFTNET MODERNISATION AND BYCATCH REDUCTION ACT—VETO

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask consent that the veto message on S. 906, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act, be considered as

having been read and spread upon the Journal in full and that the message be printed in the RECORD.

The veto message is ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning, without my approval, S. 906, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act. America's fishermen have made great sacrifices to ensure that our Nation's marine fisheries are a sustainable economic engine for coastal communities. Under my Administration, the number of United States fish stocks subject to overfishing is at a historic low. This achievement is the result of a transparent and collaborative regulatory process that is supported by regional fishery management councils. At council meetings, fishermen work with Federal Government and State government representatives to meet their statutory obligations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

In passing S. 906, the Congress has ignored the fact that the regional fishery management process has had strong, bipartisan support since its creation. By forcing the West Coast drift gillnet fishery to use alternative gear that has not been proven to be an economically viable substitute for gillnets, the Congress is effectively terminating the fishery. As a result, an estimated 30 fishing vessels, all of which are operated by family-owned small businesses, will no longer be able to bring their bounty to shore. At a time when our Nation has a seafood trade deficit of nearly \$17 billion, S. 906 will exacerbate this imbalance.

Further, S. 906 will not achieve its purported conservation benefits. The West Coast drift gillnet fishery is subject to robust legal and regulatory requirements for environmental protection that equal or exceed the environmental protections that apply to foreign fisheries. Without this fishery, Americans will import more swordfish and other species from foreign sources that frequently have more bycatch than our own fisheries. If the Congress wants to address bycatch, it should insist on a level playing field for imported seafood instead of crushing American fishing families.

My Administration has done more for American fishermen than any President before me. On May 7, 2020, I signed an Executive Order on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth to bolster our domestic seafood industry while curbing illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing abroad. On June 5, 2020, I issued a Proclamation on Modifying the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument to open it to commercial fishing that is conducted in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable laws, regulations, and requirements. And as fishermen struggled to stay on the water during the pandemic, I issued a Memorandum on Protecting the United

States Lobster Industry and later made approximately \$530 million available, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Seafood Trade Relief Program, to support the United States seafood industry and fishermen affected by retaliatory tariffs from foreign governments.

My Administration would support provisions of the enrolled bill, if passed separately, which would authorize fee collection in a different fishery—the Pacific Halibut fishery. This authority is needed to implement a provision of the International Pacific Halibut Commission Convention, to which the United States is a party. However, for the sake of American fishermen nationwide, I will not let the Congress circumvent the fisheries management process by effectively terminating a fishery without appropriate consultation and input from fishery management councils. If this occurred, it would increase our reliance on imported seafood and take away the livelihoods of hard-working Americans and their family businesses. It is my duty to return S. 906 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, January 1, 2021.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, the time has come to declare victory and come home from the war in Afghanistan—the longest war in the history of our country.

Over 4,000 Americans have died fighting in Afghanistan, and over 20,000 have been wounded. It is time to bring our soldiers home.

After the 9/11 attacks, I supported going into Afghanistan. We were absolutely justified in rooting out the Taliban who harbored al-Qaida.

Had I been in Congress at that time, I would have voted in favor of going into Afghanistan.

But the people who attacked us on 9/11 have all been killed or captured. They are long gone. But we are still there.

Most of the people fighting us in Afghanistan today are the successors or children or the children of their children.

The cycle shows no sign of ending. The war shows no sign of ending. It is not sustainable to keep fighting in Afghanistan generation after generation.

Here is some perspective: We have been fighting in Afghanistan for so long that when the 9/11 attacks happened, our youngest soldiers fighting

there today weren't even born yet. American fathers who fought in Afghanistan are now watching as their sons fight in Afghanistan.

We have spent about \$1 trillion to establish an Afghan government—a government that is rife with corruption and dysfunction. It is a government that cannot perform much of any government function on its own. So we spend more to do for them what they still cannot do for themselves.

A trillion dollars and we have hardly progressed from where we started.

Yet instead of outrage—which is how most Americans feel—the reaction from Congress is, gosh, maybe let's spend a trillion more.

After World War II, much of Europe was reduced to rubble. It was utterly destroyed. So we rebuilt Europe through the Marshall Plan.

We have now spent many times more to rebuild Afghanistan than we did under the Marshall Plan. What has that money gotten us?

We have built infrastructure in Afghanistan and then watched it deteriorate and watched the Afghans be unable to even maintain the infrastructure we built for them, and then they ask us for more money to maintain the structure. So we rebuild the infrastructure we just built for them.

Meanwhile, our roads and our bridges here at home crumble as we spend millions upon millions to rebuild the infrastructure in Afghanistan.

I want to walk through some examples of how our money has been used in Afghanistan.

Several years ago, we reportedly hired a local security consultant to help secure road construction projects, at a cost of \$1 million per year. But according to the report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, American officials came to suspect that the money was being funneled to insurgents to stage attacks on our infrastructure, which could be used to justify the security contract.

So our money was going to a guy who was apparently paying insurgents to stage attacks against him so he could justify his security contract. It is crazy.

We spent \$43 million on a natural gas, gas station. Guess how many vehicles in Afghanistan run on natural gas. Zero. You can't even find the gas station. My staff actually went there to see how the money had been spent, and they were told they couldn't go there because it was too unsafe. Now the report is that the gas station has been abandoned—and with it \$43 million flushed away.

We spent nearly \$80 million on a luxury hotel. Why is the American taxpayer building luxury hotels in Kabul? Guess what. It was abandoned halfway through. It is a skeleton. The Taliban are now said to climb up into the structure and shoot down at our Embassy.

We spent about \$400 million on equipment and other things to create an Afghan Army Corps of Engineers. Except

all the equipment we bought was lost. Gone.

We spent hundreds of millions on electrification projects in Afghanistan, but the system wasn't working. Afghans didn't understand that you had to pay for electricity and that you couldn't climb up utility poles. So, we spent almost \$2 million on a public awareness campaign to tell Afghans that they did, in fact, have to pay for electricity and to please stop climbing on the electrical wires.

There was a multimillion-dollar highway project that also required \$32 million in community outreach. This is basically an attempt to help locals understand what is happening, since they have no experience with a giant highway or what it is for.

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction examined this "community outreach" and found that one Regional Coordinator was given cash—\$75,000—to help with outreach with locals, but SIGAR found that they could not account for the \$75,000 which had been filed as used for "goat distribution." Now, I don't know a lot about goats, but that seems like a lot of "goat" money.

The guy giving out the goat money mysteriously disappeared. The inspector general reports that the money is unrecoverable.

My subcommittee held an oversight hearing on Afghan war spending, and Ambassador Boucher, one of the witnesses, recounted that the Afghan Finance Minister told him 80 to 90 percent of the money Congress approves disappears before it gets to Afghanistan. It is not just corruption. He said: You know, we hire a contractor who hires a subcontractor, who hires a bunch of consultants, who hires a bunch of security personnel, who flies in airplanes, etc. And by the time you get somebody on the ground in Afghanistan receiving a benefit, it is a very small portion of all those billions and billions of dollars that Congress allocated for whatever that purpose was.

We continue to pour good money after bad into Afghanistan, hoping that the outcome will somehow change, hoping that maybe the next 20 years will produce better results than the last 20 years did.

The American people say "Come home," and now is the time. A Pew poll from last year found that 59 percent of Americans—and 58 percent of veterans—thought the Afghanistan war has not been worth fighting. One poll from this year shows far more Americans support withdrawal from Afghanistan than support continuing the war, and almost three-quarters of veterans support ending the war.

We should be listening to those who have been on the ground in Afghanistan. There are so many veterans who have witnessed firsthand the rudderless direction of the war.

We should listen to Army combat medic Shane Reynolds, who served in Iraq: "For all of us that went over

there and worked so hard, and put our families through so much, and there was never a strategy. We were just going through motions, chasing ghosts through mountains . . . We felt that there was no plan, there was no strategy and there was no will to change anything about that."

Maybe the Senate should listen to Infantryman Jay O'Brien, who served in Kandahar:

"Now I realize that no one above us knew what the hell was going on either. It's systemic willful ignorance all the way up to the top."

Army Intelligence Officer Gregg Frostrom, who served four deployments overseas over an 11-year period, captures the perspective of those who served:

"There's a lot of feeling like you're Sisyphus, like you're just pushing the rock up the hill, and you go home for six months, and you come back and the rock's at the bottom of the hill and you're like, well, now I've got to start pushing it again."

President Trump ran for the President promising to end these forever wars. The American people want to end the Afghanistan war. Yet the establishment powers in Washington and Congress have fought him at every turn.

This bill explicitly tries to tie the hands of all Presidents and make it difficult if not impossible to declare victory and come home.

Not only does this bill make it harder for any President to end a war, we already have high-ranking officials of our government directly defying the President's orders to deescalate war.

Take Syria for example. President Trump ordered troop levels to decline from around 2,000 to approximately 200. Former Ambassador Jim Jeffrey not only defied this order, he lampooned it later by saying, "What Syria withdrawal? There was never a Syria withdrawal."

According to Defense One, "outgoing Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, the U.S. special envoy for Syria acknowledges that he routinely misled senior leaders about troop levels in Syria."

Jeffrey's admitted to "playing shell games" to obscure from the President and his generals how many troops were really left in Syria. In reality, Trump's order to reduce the troops was countermanded by an unelected bureaucrat.

As Becket Adams explains, "Obscure federal workers have reportedly been in control of the U.S. military presence in northern Syria, and all in direct violation of explicit orders from the President."

Adams continues: "Nothing to worry about here, folks. Just some nameless federal drones allegedly misleading the commander of the U.S. military in order to keep troops stationed overseas in conflicts that said drones believe are necessary and winnable. People laugh when they hear the term "deep state," but it is no joke."

President Trump has ordered troop levels to be reduced in Afghanistan, so

Congress responded by passing an NDAA which actually restricts his ability to withdraw troops.

That is right. Congress, which has spent decades lecturing any and every one that we don't need 535 generals and that there is only one Commander in Chief who has absolute powers to wage war however he sees fit, has now reversed course and decided that we actually do need 535 generals in order to stop the Commander in Chief from withdrawing troops from Afghanistan.

President Trump vetoed that NDAA, and now we are here today in an attempt to override that veto, to add a 20th year to this war.

This is a mistake. But Congress has had it wrong for a long time, so this is nothing new. They just passed a \$1.4 trillion omnibus bill that no one saw until hours before it was to be voted on, and they paired it with a \$900 billion coronavirus bailout, paid for with money borrowed from our children.

We are told all the time that there is simply no more fat left to cut in the budget, that we have to borrow because we can't cut our high priorities. What are those high priorities, you may ask? Let's start with a look at this bill that just passed.

There is \$25 million for Pakistan in there. Pakistan puts Christians on death row when they are accused of blasphemy, except that allegations of blasphemy are often based on petty disputes among neighbors or coworkers. There are reportedly 80 people on death row in Pakistan for blasphemy-related charges.

There is \$700 million for Sudan in the bill, where freedom of expression is restricted.

There is another \$500 million to address the root causes of migration from Central America. I doubt the report mentions the allure of all the free stuff you can get after you break in to America.

How about \$575 million for "family planning" in the third world?

How many businesses, struggling to make payroll because their Governor closed them down, could have used that \$575 million?

Congress is borrowing a trillion dollars a year so that they can keep spending money on these kinds of things. They don't want to set priorities.

This is hardly new. I have been watching this for years and called out the big spenders in Congress for approving: \$250,000 to send kids from Pakistan to Space Camp in Alabama and Dollywood in Tennessee; \$1.8 million to improve the international perception of Afghan artisans and craftsman; \$10,000 to improve Pakistan's film industry. Really? U.S. taxpayer money to subsidize Pakistan's version of Hollywood; a \$2 million venture capital fund in Bosnia for businesses that couldn't get their own financing; almost \$8 million for foreign dance residencies. Really? Ballet for Bolivia; more than \$9 million to ease medical

debt in Cambodia. What about Americans' with medical debt; more than \$23 million to help college graduates in Morocco find jobs. How about college grads in Kentucky; \$273 million in grants to help people learn how to apply for grants. Really? U.S. taxpayers are being fleeced to teach people how to get more of our money; \$20 million to teach Laotians how to speak Laotian. Makes me want to utter Laotian profanities. But I will likely need a government grant in order to learn to swear in Laotian; \$1 million to produce a comedic variety TV show in Afghanistan. I don't know about you but I don't find that funny at all; almost \$15 million to produce foreign versions of "Sesame Street" that would teach children in other countries about climate change. Next year, I am sure the taxpayer will be sending Muppets in Masks to Madagascar; and \$153 million in development assistance that included subsidies for low-income mortgages in Nigeria.

So Americans are losing their homes, but Congress has already spent the money buying Nigerian mortgages.

Americans are losing their livelihoods, but Congress has already spent the money on economic support funds in places like Bosnia.

American infrastructure is crumbling, but Congress spends billions on roads in Afghanistan.

We could have rebuilt the Brent-Spence Bridge in my State, which has been a priority for some time, but Congress can't stop spending the money overseas.

Again, the war in Afghanistan costs \$50 billion per year. Our mission is complete. Al-Qaida is diminished. Osama bin Laden is dead. It is time to declare victory. The American people want the war to end. So many of our veterans want the war to end. The President is trying to bring it to an end. But Congress is standing in the way.

Today we have the chance to act as the people's representatives instead of acting like 535 generals. We should not override the veto. We should remove the language that tries to block the President's drawdown of troops.

I urge a vote against the veto override.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I voted against the motions to proceed and invoke cloture on overriding the President's veto of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 because, at this time of national crisis, the Senate's first order of business should be getting more relief to struggling American families. That means the Senate should have held a clean up-or-down vote on the House-passed measure to increase the amount of the individual stimulus payments from \$600 to \$2,000. The Senate could have easily passed both the additional payments and completed the business of the NDAA veto override this week had Senator McCONNELL and the GOP majority been willing to do so. Given

the President's purported support of this relief, it could have been signed into law this week. But instead of delivering this additional help to struggling American families, the Republican majority repeatedly blocked requests to pass the additional relief by unanimous consent and refused to schedule an up-or-down vote.

That said, I support the underlying National Defense Authorization Act. The President's veto of this legislation put at risk a number of important measures, including a pay raise for our troops; critical investments for Maryland's military installations; a process to rename those military facilities that bear the names of individuals who fought with the Confederacy to preserve slavery; limits on the transfer of military equipment to local police forces; and support for key national security priorities. While the NDAA bill is not perfect and includes a number of provisions I oppose, on balance it is an important measure for our country. That is why I voted for it in the first place and why I voted in favor of overriding the President's veto.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING ED GOMES

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to Edwin "Ed" Gomes, an exemplary public servant, community leader, and advocate for equality and justice. Sadly, Ed passed away on December 22, 2020, at the age of 84. He will be remembered for his outstanding legacy of dedication to Connecticut as a statesman and an activist.

Ed began his impressive career on behalf of our country in the U.S. Army, serving for 5 years. A dedicated steelworkers' union representative, he was first elected to the Bridgeport City Council in 1983. Throughout his decades on the council, Ed quickly earned the respect of constituents and colleagues, alike.

In 2004, Ed was elected to the Connecticut Senate, where he served for a total of 12 years. As State senator, Ed fought tirelessly for the people of Connecticut, always going the extra mile to help his constituents. He knew that government could instill positive change for working families and constantly advocated on their behalf.

Committed to social reform and civil rights, Ed participated in the March on Washington in 1963. His activism touched countless lives across our State and was an inspiration for all of us. Known for his passionate efforts to help others and strong principles, Ed was also respected across the aisle and warmly recognized for his positive spirit. Those who had the chance to work with him know well his respected, straightforward style and readiness to bolster advocacy by pulling from his personal experiences.

I had the privilege of attending the annual L'Ambiance memorial cere-

mony, recognizing those workers who died in a horrific construction accident, with Ed, who unstintingly continued his advocacy for workplace safety. There was always an opportunity to do more and raise greater awareness of issues facing Connecticut's working families. His dedication to fighting injustice was a model across our State, and he never hesitated to initiate change from the frontlines. I can attest firsthand to Ed's unfailing attitude, which was equal parts joy and determination. His commitment to bettering our State and loyalty to his friends and family have left a lasting, positive mark on Connecticut's legacy.

My wife Cynthia and I extend our deepest sympathies to Ed's family during this difficult time. May their many wonderful memories of Ed provide them solace and comfort.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT OF THE VETO OF S. 906, THE DRIFTNET MODERNIZATION AND BYCATCH REDUCTION ACT—PM 63

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning, without my approval, S. 906, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act. America's fishermen have made great sacrifices to ensure that our Nation's marine fisheries are a sustainable economic engine for coastal communities. Under my Administration, the number of United States fish stocks subject to overfishing is at a historic low. This achievement is the result of a transparent and collaborative regulatory process that is supported by regional fishery management councils. At council meetings, fishermen work with Federal Government and State government representatives to meet their statutory obligations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

In passing S. 906, the Congress has ignored the fact that the regional fishery management process has had strong, bipartisan support since its creation. By forcing the West Coast drift gillnet fishery to use alternative gear that has not been proven to be an economically viable substitute for gillnets, the Congress is effectively terminating the fishery. As a result, an estimated 30 fishing vessels, all of which are operated by family-owned small businesses,

will no longer be able to bring their bounty to shore. At a time when our Nation has a seafood trade deficit of nearly \$17 billion, S. 906 will exacerbate this imbalance.

Further, S. 906 will not achieve its purported conservation benefits. The West Coast drift gillnet fishery is subject to robust legal and regulatory requirements for environmental protection that equal or exceed the environmental protections that apply to foreign fisheries. Without this fishery, Americans will import more swordfish and other species from foreign sources that frequently have more bycatch than our own fisheries. If the Congress wants to address bycatch, it should insist on a level playing field for imported seafood instead of crushing American fishing families.

My Administration has done more for American fishermen than any President before me. On May 7, 2020, I signed an Executive Order on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth to bolster our domestic seafood industry while curbing illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing abroad. On June 5, 2020, I issued a Proclamation on Modifying the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument to open it to commercial fishing that is conducted in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable laws, regulations, and requirements. And as fishermen struggled to stay on the water during the pandemic, I issued a Memorandum on Protecting the United States Lobster Industry and later made approximately \$530 million available, through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Seafood Trade Relief Program, to support the United States seafood industry and fishermen affected by retaliatory tariffs from foreign governments.

My Administration would support provisions of the enrolled bill, if passed separately, which would authorize fee collection in a different fishery—the Pacific Halibut fishery. This authority is needed to implement a provision of the International Pacific Halibut Commission Convention, to which the United States is a party. However, for the sake of American fishermen nationwide, I will not let the Congress circumvent the fisheries management process by effectively terminating a fishery without appropriate consultation and input from fishery management councils. If this occurred, it would increase our reliance on imported seafood and take away the livelihoods of hard-working Americans and their family businesses. It is my duty to return S. 906 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, January 1, 2021.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CONNOLLY) has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1472. An act to rename the Homestead National Monument of America near Beatrice, Nebraska, as the Homestead National Historical Park.

H.R. 4044. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY) announced that on today, January 1, 2021, he has signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker pro tempore of the House (Mr. CONNOLLY):

S. 371. An act to provide regulatory relief to charitable organizations that provide housing assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 1310. An act to strengthen the participation of elected national legislators in the activities of the Organization of American States and reaffirm United States support for Organization of American States human rights and anti-corruption initiatives, and for other purposes.

S. 5076. An act to authorize the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate to delegate authority to approve payroll and personnel.

H.R. 221. An act to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to monitor and combat anti-Semitism globally, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1923. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint and issue certain circulating collectible coins, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1925. An act to designate the Manhattan Campus of the New York Harbor Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs as the "Margaret Cochran Corbin Campus of the New York Harbor Health Care System".

H.R. 2744. An act to authorize the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to prescribe the manner in which programs of the agency are identified overseas, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3153. An act to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on opioid addiction, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4704. An act to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support multidisciplinary research on the science of suicide, and to advance the knowledge and understanding of issues that may be associated with several aspects of suicide including intrinsic and extrinsic factors related to areas such as wellbeing, resilience, and vulnerability.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, January 1, 2021, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 371. An act to provide regulatory relief to charitable organizations that provide housing assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 1310. An act to strengthen the participation of elected national legislators in the activities of the Organization of American

States and reaffirm United States support for Organization of American States human rights and anti-corruption initiatives, and for other purposes.

S. 5076. An act to authorize the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate to delegate authority to approve payroll and personnel actions.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR:

S. 5086. A bill to allow Senators, Senators-elect, committees of the Senate, leadership offices, and other offices of the Senate to share employees, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S.J. Res. 82. A joint resolution relating to the disapproval of the proposed export to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of certain defense articles; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 2561

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2561, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, and for other purposes.

S. 2886

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2886, a bill to prohibit the use of animal testing for cosmetics and the sale of cosmetics tested on animals.

S. 4757

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 4757, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to establish additional requirements for dealers, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR:

S. 5086. A bill to allow Senators, Senators-elect, committees of the Senate, leadership offices, and other offices of the Senate to share employees, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

S. 5086

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Senate Shared Employee Act".

SEC. 2. ALLOWING SENATORS, COMMITTEES, LEADERSHIP OFFICES, AND OTHER OFFICES OF THE SENATE TO SHARE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 114 of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1978 (2 U.S.C. 4576) is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a)" before "Notwithstanding";

(2) by striking "position, each of" and all that follows through the period at the end

and inserting the following: "qualifying position if the aggregate gross pay from those positions does not exceed—

"(1) the maximum rate specified in section 105(d)(2) of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1968 (2 U.S.C. 4575(d)(2)), as amended and modified; or

"(2) in a case where 1 or more of the individual's qualifying positions are positions described in subsection (d)(2)(B), the maximum rate specified in section 105(e)(3) of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1968 (2 U.S.C. 4575(e)(3)), as amended and modified.";

and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(b)(1) For an individual serving in more than 1 qualifying position under subsection (a), the cost of any travel for official business shall be paid by the office authorizing the travel.

"(2) Messages for each electronic mail account used in connection with carrying out the official duties of an individual serving in more than 1 qualifying position under subsection (a) may be delivered to and sent from a single handheld communications device provided to the individual for purposes of official business.

"(3)(A) For purposes of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), the rate of basic pay for an individual serving in more than 1 qualifying position under subsection (a) shall be the total basic pay received by the individual from all such positions.

"(B) For an individual serving in more than one qualifying position under subsection (a), for purposes of the rights and obligations described in, or described in the provisions applied under, title II of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1311 et seq.) related to practices used at a time when the individual is serving in such a qualifying position with an employing office, the rate of pay for the individual shall be the individual rate of pay received from the employing office.

"(c)(1) If the duties of a qualifying position under subsection (a) include information technology services and support, an individual may only serve in the qualifying position and 1 or more additional qualifying positions under such subsection if the individual is in compliance with each information technology standard and policy established for Senate offices by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate.

"(2) Notwithstanding subsection (a), an employee serving in a qualifying position in the Office of the Secretary of the Senate or the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate may serve in an additional qualifying position only if—

"(A) the other qualifying position is with the other Office; or

"(B) the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate has approved the arrangement.

"(d) In this section, the term 'qualifying position' means a position that—

"(1) is designated as a shared position for purposes of this section by the Senator or other head of the office in which the position is located; and

"(2) is one of the following:

"(A) A position—

"(i) that is in the office of a Senator; and

"(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate.

"(B) A position—

"(i) that is in any committee of the Senate (including a select or special committee) or a joint committee of Congress; and

"(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate out of an appropriation under the heading 'INQUIRIES AND INVESTIGATIONS' or 'JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE', or a heading relating to a Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies.

"(C) A position—

"(i) that is in another office (excluding the Office of the Vice President and the Office of the Chaplain of the Senate); and

"(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate out of an appropriation under the heading 'SALARIES, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES'.

"(D) A position—

"(i) that is filled pursuant to section 105 of the Second Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1978 (2 U.S.C. 6311); and

"(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate out of an appropriation under the heading 'MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS'."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect beginning on the day that is 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2735. Mr. BOOZMAN (for Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 406, recognizing that for 50 years, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its ten members, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, have worked with the United States toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia, and expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States will continue to remain a strong, reliable, and active partner in the ASEAN region.

SA 2736. Mr. BOOZMAN (for Mr. RISCH) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 684, calling on the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups from the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions to end all violence, respect the human rights of all Cameroonians, and pursue a genuinely inclusive dialogue toward resolving the ongoing civil conflict in Anglophone Cameroon.

SA 2737. Mr. BOOZMAN (for Mr. RISCH) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 684, *supra*.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2735. Mr. BOOZMAN (for Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 406, recognizing that for 50 years, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its ten members, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, have worked with the United States toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia, and expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States will continue to remain a strong, reliable, and active partner in the ASEAN region; as follows:

In the second whereas clause of the preamble, strike "70,000,000" and insert "7,000,000".

SA 2736. Mr. BOOZMAN (for Mr. RISCH) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 684, calling on the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups from the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions to end all violence, respect the human rights of all Cameroonians, and pursue a genuinely inclusive dialogue toward resolving the ongoing civil con-

flict in Anglophone Cameroon; as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: "That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns abuses committed by state security forces and armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, including extrajudicial killings and detentions, the use of force against civilians and nonviolent protestors, torture, rape, kidnappings, and other forms of violence against women, and violations of the freedoms of press, expression, and assembly;

(2) urges all parties to the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon, including political opposition groups, to—

(A) conclude and uphold an immediate ceasefire;

(B) guarantee unfettered humanitarian access and assistance to the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(C) exercise restraint and ensure that political protests are peaceful; and

(D) establish a credible process for an inclusive dialogue that includes all relevant stakeholders, including from civil society, to achieve a sustainable political solution that respects the rights and freedoms of all of the people of Cameroon;

(3) affirms that the United States Government continues to hold the Government of Cameroon responsible for safeguarding the safety, security, and constitutional rights of all citizens, regardless of their region of origin or the regions in which they reside, or their religious beliefs or political views;

(4) urges the Government of Cameroon to—

(A) initiate a credible, inclusive, good-faith effort to end the armed conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon by addressing the root causes of the crisis and grievances and seeking nonviolent solutions to resolve the conflict, including possibly involving an independent mediator in negotiations;

(B) follow through on initiatives developed to address the grievances that sparked the conflict, including the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development, and the National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Committee;

(C) fully implement recommendations of the Major National Dialogue held in late 2019;

(D) respect the rule of law and the constitutional rights of all Cameroonians, including members of the political opposition, civil society activists, and journalists;

(E) allow for credible, independent, and transparent investigations of all allegations of human rights abuses committed in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(F) release all political prisoners and journalists currently detained and immediately stop all arbitrary detention, torture, forced disappearances, deaths in custody, and inhumane prison conditions; and

(G) work with United States law enforcement to thoroughly investigate and prosecute those responsible for the murder of Charles Wesco;

(5) urges the Anglophone armed separatist groups to—

(A) engage peacefully with government officials to express grievances and engage in nonviolent efforts to resolve the conflict, including participation in a credible and inclusive dialogue, possibly involving an independent mediator;

(B) immediately cease human rights abuses, including killings of civilians, torture, kidnapping, and extortion;

(C) immediately end coercive and violent enforcement of the school boycott in the

Northwest and Southwest regions and attacks on schools, teachers, and education officials, and allow for the peaceful and safe return of all students to class; and

(D) publicly condemn the illegal detention and kidnapping of civilians;

(6) urges the Department of State, Department of the Treasury, and United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to—

(A) consider imposing targeted sanctions on individual government and separatist leaders “responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”;

(B) press the Government of Cameroon to provide unfettered humanitarian access to vulnerable populations in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(C) support credible efforts to address the root causes of the conflict and to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation, possibly involving an independent mediator, and efforts to aid the economic recovery of and fight coronavirus in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(D) support humanitarian and development programming, including to meet immediate needs, advance nonviolent conflict resolution and reconciliation, promote economic recovery and development, support primary and secondary education, and strengthen democratic processes, including political decentralization, enshrined as a fundamental principle of state governance in the Constitution of Cameroon;

(E) continue to limit security assistance to Cameroon and ensure that United States training and equipment is not being used to facilitate human rights abuses in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(F) prioritize efforts to help develop and sustain effective, professional civilian oversight of law enforcement and security services in Cameroon to ensure they are held accountable for abuses; and

(G) engage in an ongoing effort to ensure that the crisis in the Anglophone regions is discussed in international fora, including the United Nations Security Council, that focus on urgent international diplomatic engagement and response; and

(7) urges members of the international community to—

(A) join in a strategic collective effort to pressure the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups, including through the use of available diplomatic and punitive tools, to immediately conclude and uphold a ceasefire, participate in an inclusive and meaningful dialogue to address the root causes of the conflict and pending grievances, and seek nonviolent solutions to the conflict, including by possibly involving an independent and credible international mediator;

(B) mobilize and coordinate funding for local and international organizations to provide humanitarian and development assistance, including to fight coronavirus, to communities affected by the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(C) leverage bilateral relationships to encourage key partners of Cameroon, particularly France, to help foster a peaceful resolution to the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, potentially with the involvement of an independent mediator, and implement a mutually agreed-upon program to address longstanding grievances and marginalization; and

(D) use regional and international fora, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the United Nations Security Council to—

(i) discuss the ongoing crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(ii) push for a cessation of violence, an expedient resolution, and the implementation of a mutually agreed-upon program for addressing the root causes and pending grievances; and

(iii) maintain calls for the investigation and prosecution of human rights abuses and crimes committed against civilians.

SA 2737. Mr. BOOZMAN (for Mr. RISCH) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 684, calling on the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups from the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions to end all violence, respect the human rights of all Cameroonians, and pursue a genuinely inclusive dialogue toward resolving the ongoing civil conflict in Anglophone Cameroon; as follows:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas Cameroon is beset with multiple security challenges, including a Boko Haram insurgency in the Far North region, cross-border conflict and criminality by Central African militia groups to the east, and a civil war involving the Government of Cameroon and Anglophone separatist armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

Whereas the official actions and policies of the Francophone-dominated Government of Cameroon have repressed English-speaking Cameroonians politically and economically throughout the history of Cameroon, dating back to the reunification of British-administered Southern Cameroons and French Cameroun under a federal system in October 1961;

Whereas, in June 1972, following a national referendum, a new constitution was adopted that abolished the federal system, changed the name of the country from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to the United Republic of Cameroon, and gave additional powers to the presidency;

Whereas Paul Biya, the oldest head of state in Africa, has been the President of Cameroon since 1982, maintaining his grip on power by centralizing authority in the executive, undermining the Constitution of Cameroon, impeding democratic governance through corrupt practices, using security services to repress the opposition, and conducting elections marred by widespread irregularities and allegations of fraud;

Whereas key decentralization reforms enacted in the Constitution of Cameroon in 1996, which mandated the establishment of a decentralized unitary state, “equality of all citizens before the law”, the equal status of French and English as official languages, and the establishment of local authorities with “administrative and financial autonomy”, remain largely unrealized, though an enabling law was adopted in December 2019;

Whereas, throughout his tenure, President Biya has spent extended periods in Europe, pursued government policies exclusively benefiting the Francophone majority in Cameroon, and crippled many parastatals and private enterprises in the Northwest and Southwest regions, further marginalizing English-speaking Cameroonians;

Whereas, in October 2016, English-speaking lawyers, students, and teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon took to the streets to peacefully protest marginalization of English-speaking Cameroonians by the Government of Cameroon in the legal and education systems, as exemplified by the appointment of French-speaking judges and teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions and the pub-

lishing of important legislation solely in the French language;

Whereas those peaceful protests by English-speaking lawyers, students, and teachers were met with excessive force by the police and gendarmerie of Cameroon, which led to gross human rights violations, the arrest of lawyers, teachers, and Anglophone civic leaders, and their detention in the notorious Kondengui prison in Yaoundé;

Whereas, amid broader protests across the Northwest and Southwest regions demanding greater autonomy from the central government of Cameroon, on October 1, 2017, the 56th anniversary of the end of British trusteeship over Southern Cameroons, the Anglophone crisis escalated as separatist armed groups declared independence from Cameroon;

Whereas, in 2017, Anglophone separatist armed groups responded to the repressive and violent actions of the Government of Cameroon by targeting government officials and facilities as well as civilians and traditional leaders seen as sympathetic to the Government of Cameroon and brutally enforcing “ghost town operations” (general strikes) and school boycotts in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

Whereas lengthy government-imposed shutdowns of the internet and social media in the Northwest and Southwest regions, totaling 240 days between 2017 and 2018, had a devastating impact on the economies and educational institutions in the regions, undermined freedom of expression, prevented the free flow of information related to the conflict, and restricted the ability of local communities to interact and communicate;

Whereas the conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon has caused considerable instability and human suffering, with more than 3,000 deaths linked to the conflict as of 2018, with more recent figures difficult to ascertain due to lack of access to the Northwest and Southwest regions, and according to United Nations agencies, as of 2020, approximately 3,000,000 people in Cameroon are in need of humanitarian assistance, approximately 60,000 Cameroonian refugees have fled to Nigeria, and approximately 700,000 persons are internally displaced;

Whereas numerous credible reports from human rights monitors, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, have documented the excessive use of force by government security forces against Cameroonian civilians living in the Anglophone regions, including the burning of villages, the use of live ammunition against protestors, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, sexual abuse, and killing of civilians, including women, children, and the elderly;

Whereas the Department of State 2019 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Cameroon documented killings of civilians, kidnappings, abductions, and hostage taking, beatings, attacks on health workers and media, restrictions on movements of persons and goods, and use of child soldiers by armed Anglophone separatists;

Whereas the United Nations Children’s Fund estimates that more than 855,000 children are out of school due to the conflict, and the Department of State added Cameroon to the Child Soldiers Prevention Act List in the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report as a foreign government “identified during the previous year as having governmental armed forces, police, or other security forces, or government-supported armed groups that recruit or use child soldiers”;

Whereas United States citizen Charles Wesco was shot and killed near the town of Bamenda, Cameroon, on October 30, 2018,

and, in November 2018, the Department of State stated, “In memory of American missionary Charles Wesco and all others who have lost their lives in the Anglophone Crisis, we urge all sides to end the violence and enter into broad-based reconciliatory dialogue without preconditions.”;

Whereas, in June 2019, the Government of Switzerland announced that, together with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, it was facilitating a dialogue between the Government of Cameroon and armed opposition groups to support a resolution of the Anglophone crisis;

Whereas, in September 2019, President Biya hastily announced a Major National Dialogue, chaired by Prime Minister Ngute from September 30 to October 4, 2019, in Yaoundé, “to examine the ways and means to respond to the deeply-held aspirations of the populations in the Northwest and Southwest”;

Whereas, though the Major National Dialogue led to some concessions by the Government of Cameroon on broader democratization issues, such as the release of some political prisoners, including the leader of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, Maurice Kamto, and some of his associates after nine months of detention, it failed to bring separatist groups to the table;

Whereas, since the Major National Dialogue, the killing of civilians and other atrocities continue to be recorded across the Northwest and Southwest regions, including in towns and villages such as Babanki, Bamenda, Bangem, Buea, Mamfe, Muyuka, Pinyin, and Ngarbuh, and the Government of Cameroon recently has resumed its attack on the political opposition, placing Mr. Kamto under house arrest and detaining dozens of his supporters;

Whereas national and international outrage followed the massacre of at least 23 people, including 15 children and 2 pregnant women, by government security forces and allied militia on February 14, 2020, in Ngarbuh, Donga Mantung division, in the Northwest region, and a commission of inquiry established by Cameroonian authorities ultimately led to the arrest and charging of 3 soldiers for murder;

Whereas, on June 5, 2020, amidst increasing concern over attacks on freedom of the press and detention of journalists on politically motivated charges in recent years, Cameroon authorities confirmed that an Anglophone journalist covering the conflict, Samuel Ajiekah Abuwe, known as Wazizi, who was arrested in August 2019 and transferred to a military facility, died in custody shortly after his arrest, an acknowledgment that led to widespread condemnation and calls for an independent inquiry;

Whereas the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) of the Government of Cameroon, which has been accused of torture and extrajudicial killings and implicated in massacres like that of February 14, 2020, has received training and support from the United States, potentially in contravention of legal requirements that “no assistance shall be furnished . . . to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights”;

Whereas, in February 2019, the Department of State announced that it would withhold some security assistance to Cameroon, including equipment and training, citing credible allegations of human rights violations by state security forces and a lack of investigation, accountability, and transparency by the Government of Cameroon in response;

Whereas, on December 26, 2019, the United States terminated the designation of Cameroon as a beneficiary under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.) because “the Government of Cam-

eroon currently engages in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”;

Whereas a European Parliament resolution, passed on April 18, 2019, urged inclusive political dialogue to resolve the Anglophone crisis, called for the conflict to be considered by the United Nations Security Council, and urged the European Union to “use the political leverage provided by development aid and other bilateral programmes to enhance the defense of human rights in Cameroon”;

Whereas France maintains considerable interests in Cameroon, including significant economic and security cooperation, but has not adequately used its influence to stem atrocities committed in the Anglophone regions or support stronger international action to seek resolution to the conflict;

Whereas the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Cameroon stated on January 24, 2019, that “Cameroon can no longer be a forgotten crisis; it needs to be high on our agenda”, and, on June 22, 2020, a group of former world leaders and 5 Nobel Peace Laureates called on the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Secretary-General, the African Union, the Commonwealth of Nations, and La Francophonie to “ensure that Cameroon’s Anglophone conflict is on the agenda of the forthcoming UN Security Council meeting and all UNOCA sessions before the UNSC”;

Whereas, on May 13, 2019, an Arria-formula meeting on the humanitarian crisis in Cameroon was held for the United Nations Security Council, but a formal meeting on the situation in Cameroon has not yet been placed on the United Nations Security Council agenda;

Whereas, on July 1, 2020, in Resolution 2532 (2020), the United Nations Security Council unanimously underlined its support of the appeal of the United Nations Secretary-General for a global ceasefire in all conflicts as the world battles the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas there is a significant Cameroonian diaspora in the United States, and Cameroon is a longstanding security partner and aid recipient of the United States, participating in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) led by the Department of State and in United States-supported efforts to counter Boko Haram and the Islamic State-West Africa, both of which have mounted terrorist operations in the Far North region of Cameroon since 2014: Now, therefore, be it

SENATE SHARED EMPLOYEE ACT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 5086, which was introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5086) to allow Senators, Senators-elect, committees of the Senate, leadership offices, and other officers of the Senate to share employees, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 5086) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:
S. 5086

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Senate Shared Employee Act”.

SEC. 2. ALLOWING SENATORS, COMMITTEES, LEADERSHIP OFFICES, AND OTHER OFFICES OF THE SENATE TO SHARE EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 114 of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1978 (2 U.S.C. 4576) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(a)” before “Notwithstanding”;

(2) by striking “position, each of” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “qualifying position if the aggregate gross pay from those positions does not exceed—

“(1) the maximum rate specified in section 105(d)(2) of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1968 (2 U.S.C. 4575(d)(2)), as amended and modified; or

“(2) in a case where 1 or more of the individual’s qualifying positions are positions described in subsection (d)(2)(B), the maximum rate specified in section 105(e)(3) of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1968 (2 U.S.C. 4575(e)(3)), as amended and modified.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(b)(1) For an individual serving in more than 1 qualifying position under subsection (a), the cost of any travel for official business shall be paid by the office authorizing the travel.

“(2) Messages for each electronic mail account used in connection with carrying out the official duties of an individual serving in more than 1 qualifying position under subsection (a) may be delivered to and sent from a single handheld communications device provided to the individual for purposes of official business.

“(3)(A) For purposes of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), the rate of basic pay for an individual serving in more than 1 qualifying position under subsection (a) shall be the total basic pay received by the individual from all such positions.

“(B) For an individual serving in more than one qualifying position under subsection (a), for purposes of the rights and obligations described in, or described in the provisions applied under, title II of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1311 et seq.) related to practices used at a time when the individual is serving in such a qualifying position with an employing office, the rate of pay for the individual shall be the individual rate of pay received from the employing office.

“(c)(1) If the duties of a qualifying position under subsection (a) include information technology services and support, an individual may only serve in the qualifying position and 1 or more additional qualifying positions under such subsection if the individual is in compliance with each information technology standard and policy established for Senate offices by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate.

“(2) Notwithstanding subsection (a), an employee serving in a qualifying position in the Office of the Secretary of the Senate or the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate may serve in an additional qualifying position only if—

“(A) the other qualifying position is with the other Office; or

“(B) the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate has approved the arrangement.

“(d) In this section, the term ‘qualifying position’ means a position that—

“(1) is designated as a shared position for purposes of this section by the Senator or other head of the office in which the position is located; and

“(2) is one of the following:

“(A) A position—

“(i) that is in the office of a Senator; and

“(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate.

“(B) A position—

“(i) that is in any committee of the Senate (including a select or special committee) or a joint committee of Congress; and

“(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate out of an appropriation under the heading ‘INQUIRIES AND INVESTIGATIONS’ or ‘JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE’, or a heading relating to a Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies.

“(C) A position—

“(i) that is in another office (excluding the Office of the Vice President and the Office of the Chaplain of the Senate); and

“(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate out of an appropriation under the heading ‘SALARIES, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES’.

“(D) A position—

“(i) that is filled pursuant to section 105 of the Second Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1978 (2 U.S.C. 6311); and

“(ii) the pay of which is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate out of an appropriation under the heading ‘MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS’.”

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect beginning on the day that is 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

RECOGNIZING THAT FOR 50 YEARS, THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) AND ITS TEN MEMBERS, BRUNEI, CAMBODIA, INDONESIA, LAOS, MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, THE PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE, THAILAND, AND VIETNAM, HAVE WORKED WITH THE UNITED STATES TOWARD STABILITY, PROSPERITY, AND PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 466, S. Res 406.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 406) recognizing that for 50 years, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its ten members, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, have worked with the United States toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia, and expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States will continue to remain a strong, reliable, and active partner in the ASEAN region.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which was reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic, and with an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

S. RES. 406

Whereas the 10 members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) represent a variety of different cultures and beliefs;

Whereas an estimated 7,000,000 United States citizens identify with an ethnicity represented in ASEAN;

Whereas the United States and ASEAN have been cooperating to advance our mutual interests for 40 years, having first established dialogue relations on September 10, 1977, through the 1977 Joint Communiqué of the First ASEAN-United States Dialogue and the United States' accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Session in Thailand on July 22, 2009;

Whereas the United States was the first non-ASEAN country to appoint an ambassador to ASEAN on April 29, 2008, and the first non-member to establish a permanent mission to ASEAN in 2010;

Whereas cooperation between the United States Government and the governments and people of the ASEAN nations can help realize our common goals of a free, open, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific rooted in a rule-based order that promotes security, opportunity, and dignity to all peoples;

Whereas the member states of ASEAN are all vibrant economies that have given rise to a flourishing middle class and collectively are predicted to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2050;

Whereas, in 2019, ASEAN's 10 members represented the sixth largest economy in the world and constitute the United States fourth-largest export market, with total United States exports to ASEAN countries reaching \$116,200,000,000;

Whereas ASEAN is the number one destination for United States investment in the Indo-Pacific, with \$329,000,000,000 in cumulative foreign direct investment;

Whereas ASEAN nations surround critical global sea lanes, with \$5,300,000,000,000 of global trade and more than half of the world's total shipped tonnage transiting through ASEAN waters each year;

Whereas the ultimate goal of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is to create one of the world's largest single market economies and facilitate the free movement of goods, services, and professionals;

Whereas the United States-ASEAN Single Window custom facilitation system expedites intra-ASEAN trade and enhances the ability of United States businesses to operate in the region;

Whereas the United States-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) has trained more than 4,600 small-to-medium size enterprises, with nearly half of the participants being women entrepreneurs;

Whereas the Lower Mekong Initiative, established on July 23, 2009, promotes sustainable long-term economic development throughout mainland Southeast Asia and fosters regional cooperation, integration, and capacity building;

Whereas the newly announced Japan-United States Mekong Power Partnership aims to “promote a more sustainable energy sector and quality energy infrastructure development” and demonstrates the shared commitment of the United States and other Indo-Pacific nations to strengthen ties with Mekong countries;

Whereas, in 2018 and 2019, the United States announced several additional initiatives to enhance cooperation with ASEAN, including the United States-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership, the ASEAN Policy Implementation Project, and the United States-ASEAN Innovation Circle;

Whereas the United States is cooperating with ASEAN member states and providing emergency health assistance to enhance their resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the recently announced United States-

ASEAN Health Futures program that builds on the over \$3,500,000,000 the United States has invested in global health collaboration with ASEAN nations over the last 20 years;

Whereas the United States remains committed to working with ASEAN to improve the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental dignity of the people of ASEAN countries, a key ingredient to maintaining stability, promoting economic growth, and advancing good governance;

Whereas the United States opposes all actions and claims that infringe upon the freedom and lawful use of the sea, and has a national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, open access to the Indo-Pacific region's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea;

Whereas the United States is deeply concerned about recent assertive and unsafe behavior by the People's Republic of China in the South China Sea, and urges all claimants with competing territorial claims to seek peaceful resolution of disputes through collaborative diplomacy and, as necessary, international arbitration mechanisms consistent with international law;

Whereas the United States supports the Philippines' decision to use arbitration under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), done at Montego Bay December 10, 1982, to peacefully and lawfully address competing claims;

Whereas the United States supports development of a Code of Conduct (COC) that represents the interests of all parties and promotes peace and stability in the region, opposes efforts by any nation to use a COC as a vehicle to limit presence in or lawful use of the South China Sea, encourages claimants not to undertake new or unilateral attempts to change the status quo since the signing of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct, including reclamation activities or administrative measures or controls in disputed areas in the South China Sea, and encourages ASEAN countries to adopt a unified position in negotiating the COC;

Whereas the ASEAN-United States Maritime Exercise (AUXM), which ran from September 2–6, 2019, and featured over 1,000 sailors from all 11 countries, built greater maritime security on the strength of ASEAN, strengthened navy-to-navy bonds, and exemplified our shared belief in a free and open Indo-Pacific; and

Whereas natural disasters in the ASEAN region over the past four decades have resulted in major loss and damage, with a disproportionate impact on developing countries, and the United States will pursue initiatives that are consistent with sustainable long-term economic development, including the achievement of food security and poverty alleviation; improvement of conservation and sustainable management of forests, fish stocks, and oceanic resources; resilience to extreme weather events that are increasing in frequency and severity; and provision of sustainable livelihoods for local communities throughout the ASEAN region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports and affirms the full implementation of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (Public Law 115-409) with regard to elevating the United States relationship with ASEAN;

(2) stands with the nations of ASEAN as they respond to COVID-19 and supports greater cooperation in building capacity to prepare for and respond to pandemics and other public health challenges;

(3) expresses support for rescheduling the United States-ASEAN Special Summit at an appropriate time, and supports high-level United States participation in the annual ASEAN summit held each November;

(4) reaffirms the importance of United States-ASEAN economic engagement, including the elimination of barriers to cross-border commerce, and supports the ASEAN Economic Community's (AEC) goals, including strong, inclusive,

and sustainable long-term economic growth and cooperation with the United States that focuses on innovation and capacity-building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation, particularly for ASEAN's poorest countries;

(5) urges ASEAN to continue its efforts to foster greater integration and unity within the ASEAN community, as well as to foster greater integration and unity with non-ASEAN economic, political, and security partners, including Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, the European Union, Taiwan, and India;

(6) recognizes the value of strategic economic initiatives like United States-ASEAN Connect, which demonstrates a commitment to ASEAN and the AEC and builds upon economic relationships in the region;

(7) supports ASEAN nations in addressing maritime and territorial disputes in a constructive manner and in pursuing claims through peaceful, diplomatic, and, as necessary, legitimate regional and international arbitration mechanisms, consistent with international law, including through the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea that represents the interests of all parties and promotes peace and stability in the region;

(8) urges all parties involved in the maritime and territorial disputes in the Indo-Pacific region, including the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(A) to cease any current activities, and avoid undertaking any actions in the future, that undermine stability, or complicate or escalate disputes through the use of coercion, intimidation, or military force;

(B) to demilitarize islands, reefs, shoals, and other features, and refrain from new efforts to militarize, including the construction of new garrisons and facilities and the relocation of additional military personnel, material, or equipment;

(C) to oppose actions by any country that prevent other countries from exercising their sovereign rights to the resources in their exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and continental shelves by enforcing claims to those areas in the South China Sea that lack support in international law; and

(D) to oppose unilateral declarations of administrative and military districts in contested areas in the South China Sea;

(9) urges parties to refrain from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical damage to the marine environment, and supports the efforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and ASEAN to implement guidelines to address the illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the region;

(10) supports efforts by United States partners and allies in ASEAN—

(A) to enhance maritime capability and maritime domain awareness;

(B) to protect unhindered access to and use of international waterways in the Indo-Pacific region that are critical to ensuring the security and free flow of commerce;

(C) to counter piracy;

(D) to disrupt illicit maritime trafficking activities such as the trafficking of persons, goods, and drugs; and

(E) to enhance the maritime capabilities of countries or regional organizations to respond to emerging threats to maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region;

(11) urges ASEAN member states to develop a common approach to reaffirm the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration's 2016 ruling in favor of the Republic of the Philippines in the case against the People's Republic of China's excessive maritime claims;

(12) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to continue joint efforts with ASEAN to halt human smuggling and trafficking in persons, and urges ASEAN to create and strengthen regional mechanisms to provide assistance and support to refugees and migrants;

(13) supports the Lower Mekong Initiative, which has led to significant progress in promoting sustainable long-term economic development in mainland Southeast Asia and fostering integrated sub-regional cooperation and capacity building;

(14) urges ASEAN to build capacity for the promotion and protection of human rights by ASEAN member states, and the implementation of related priorities, programs, and activities;

(15) urges ASEAN governments to engage directly with leaders of civil society and human rights, including advocates of religious freedom, victims of human rights abuses, and environmental groups, and to ensure these stakeholders have a voice in constructing public policy;

(16) encourages the President of the United States to communicate to ASEAN leaders the importance of promoting the rule of law and open and transparent government, strengthening civil society, and protecting human rights, including releasing political prisoners, ceasing politically motivated prosecutions and arbitrary killings, safeguarding freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech and expression;

(17) supports efforts by organizations in ASEAN that address corruption in the public and private sectors, enhance anti-bribery compliance, enforce bribery criminalization in the private sector, and build beneficial ownership transparency through the ASEAN-USAID PROSPECT project partnered with the South East Asia Parties Against Corruption (SEA-PAC);

(18) supports the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative as an example of a people-to-people partnership that provides skills, networks, and leadership training to a new generation who will create and fill jobs, foster cross-border cooperation and partnerships, and rise to solve the regional and global challenges of the future; and

(19) applauds the ASEAN governments that have fully upheld and implemented all United Nations Security Council resolutions and international agreements with respect to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and encourages all other ASEAN governments to do the same.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute be agreed to; that the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be considered; that the amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 406), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble, in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2735) was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To make a technical correction to the preamble)

In the second whereas clause of the preamble, strike "70,000,000" and insert "7,000,000".

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 406

Whereas the 10 members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) represent a variety of different cultures and beliefs;

Whereas an estimated 7,000,000 United States citizens identify with an ethnicity represented in ASEAN;

Whereas the United States and ASEAN have been cooperating to advance our mutual interests for 40 years, having first established dialogue relations on September 10, 1977, through the 1977 Joint Communiqué of the First ASEAN-United States Dialogue and the United States' accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Session in Thailand on July 22, 2009;

Whereas the United States was the first non-ASEAN country to appoint an ambassador to ASEAN on April 29, 2008, and the first non-member to establish a permanent mission to ASEAN in 2010;

Whereas cooperation between the United States Government and the governments and people of the ASEAN nations can help realize our common goals of a free, open, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific rooted in a rule-based order that promotes security, opportunity, and dignity to all peoples;

Whereas the member states of ASEAN are all vibrant economies that have given rise to a flourishing middle class and collectively are predicted to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2050;

Whereas, in 2019, ASEAN's 10 members represented the sixth largest economy in the world and constitute the United States fourth-largest export market, with total United States exports to ASEAN countries reaching \$116,200,000,000;

Whereas ASEAN is the number one destination for United States investment in the Indo-Pacific, with \$329,000,000,000 in cumulative foreign direct investment;

Whereas ASEAN nations surround critical global sea lanes, with \$5,300,000,000,000 of global trade and more than half of the world's total shipped tonnage transiting through ASEAN waters each year;

Whereas the ultimate goal of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is to create one of the world's largest single market economies and facilitate the free movement of goods, services, and professionals;

Whereas the United States-ASEAN Single Window custom facilitation system expedites intra-ASEAN trade and enhances the ability of United States businesses to operate in the region;

Whereas the United States-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) has trained more than 4,600 small-to-medium size enterprises, with nearly half of the participants being women entrepreneurs;

Whereas the Lower Mekong Initiative, established on July 23, 2009, promotes sustainable long-term economic development throughout mainland Southeast Asia and fosters regional cooperation, integration, and capacity building;

Whereas the newly announced Japan-United States Mekong Power Partnership aims to "promote a more sustainable energy sector and quality energy infrastructure development" and demonstrates the shared commitment of the United States and other Indo-Pacific nations to strengthen ties with Mekong countries;

Whereas, in 2018 and 2019, the United States announced several additional initiatives to enhance cooperation with ASEAN, including the United States-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership, the ASEAN Policy Implementation Project, and the United States-ASEAN Innovation Circle;

Whereas the United States is cooperating with ASEAN member states and providing emergency health assistance to enhance their resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the recently announced United States-ASEAN Health Futures program that builds on the over \$3,500,000,000 the United States has invested in global health collaboration with ASEAN nations over the last 20 years;

Whereas the United States remains committed to working with ASEAN to improve the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental dignity of the people of ASEAN countries, a key ingredient to maintaining stability, promoting economic growth, and advancing good governance;

Whereas the United States opposes all actions and claims that infringe upon the freedom and lawful use of the sea, and has a national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, open access to the Indo-Pacific region's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea;

Whereas the United States is deeply concerned about recent assertive and unsafe behavior by the People's Republic of China in the South China Sea, and urges all claimants with competing territorial claims to seek peaceful resolution of disputes through collaborative diplomacy and, as necessary, international arbitration mechanisms consistent with international law;

Whereas the United States supports the Philippines' decision to use arbitration under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), done at Montego Bay December 10, 1982, to peacefully and lawfully address competing claims;

Whereas the United States supports development of a Code of Conduct (COC) that represents the interests of all parties and promotes peace and stability in the region, opposes efforts by any nation to use a COC as a vehicle to limit presence in or lawful use of the South China Sea, encourages claimants not to undertake new or unilateral attempts to change the status quo since the signing of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct, including reclamation activities or administrative measures or controls in disputed areas in the South China Sea, and encourages ASEAN countries to adopt a unified position in negotiating the COC;

Whereas the ASEAN-United States Maritime Exercise (AUXM), which ran from September 2-6, 2019, and featured over 1,000 sailors from all 11 countries, built greater maritime security on the strength of ASEAN, strengthened navy-to-navy bonds, and exemplified our shared belief in a free and open Indo-Pacific; and

Whereas natural disasters in the ASEAN region over the past four decades have resulted in major loss and damage, with a disproportionate impact on developing countries, and the United States will pursue initiatives that are consistent with sustainable long-term economic development, including the achievement of food security and poverty alleviation; improvement of conservation and sustainable management of forests, fish stocks, and oceanic resources; resilience to extreme weather events that are increasing in frequency and severity; and provision of sustainable livelihoods for local communities throughout the ASEAN region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports and affirms the full implementation of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (Public Law 115-409) with regard to elevating the United States relationship with ASEAN;

(2) stands with the nations of ASEAN as they respond to COVID-19 and supports greater cooperation in building capacity to

prepare for and respond to pandemics and other public health challenges;

(3) expresses support for rescheduling the United States-ASEAN Special Summit at an appropriate time, and supports high-level United States participation in the annual ASEAN summit held each November;

(4) reaffirms the importance of United States-ASEAN economic engagement, including the elimination of barriers to cross-border commerce, and supports the ASEAN Economic Community's (AEC) goals, including strong, inclusive, and sustainable long-term economic growth and cooperation with the United States that focuses on innovation and capacity-building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation, particularly for ASEAN's poorest countries;

(5) urges ASEAN to continue its efforts to foster greater integration and unity within the ASEAN community, as well as to foster greater integration and unity with non-ASEAN economic, political, and security partners, including Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, the European Union, Taiwan, and India;

(6) recognizes the value of strategic economic initiatives like United States-ASEAN Connect, which demonstrates a commitment to ASEAN and the AEC and builds upon economic relationships in the region;

(7) supports ASEAN nations in addressing maritime and territorial disputes in a constructive manner and in pursuing claims through peaceful, diplomatic, and, as necessary, legitimate regional and international arbitration mechanisms, consistent with international law, including through the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea that represents the interests of all parties and promotes peace and stability in the region;

(8) urges all parties involved in the maritime and territorial disputes in the Indo-Pacific region, including the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(A) to cease any current activities, and avoid undertaking any actions in the future, that undermine stability, or complicate or escalate disputes through the use of coercion, intimidation, or military force;

(B) to demilitarize islands, reefs, shoals, and other features, and refrain from new efforts to militarize, including the construction of new garrisons and facilities and the relocation of additional military personnel, material, or equipment;

(C) to oppose actions by any country that prevent other countries from exercising their sovereign rights to the resources in their exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and continental shelves by enforcing claims to those areas in the South China Sea that lack support in international law; and

(D) to oppose unilateral declarations of administrative and military districts in contested areas in the South China Sea;

(9) urges parties to refrain from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical damage to the marine environment, and supports the efforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and ASEAN to implement guidelines to address the illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the region;

(10) supports efforts by United States partners and allies in ASEAN—

(A) to enhance maritime capability and maritime domain awareness;

(B) to protect unhindered access to and use of international waterways in the Indo-Pacific region that are critical to ensuring the security and free flow of commerce;

(C) to counter piracy;

(D) to disrupt illicit maritime trafficking activities such as the trafficking of persons, goods, and drugs; and

(E) to enhance the maritime capabilities of countries or regional organizations to respond to emerging threats to maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region;

(11) urges ASEAN member states to develop a common approach to reaffirm the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration's 2016 ruling in favor of the Republic of the Philippines in the case against the People's Republic of China's excessive maritime claims;

(12) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to continue joint efforts with ASEAN to halt human smuggling and trafficking in persons, and urges ASEAN to create and strengthen regional mechanisms to provide assistance and support to refugees and migrants;

(13) supports the Lower Mekong Initiative, which has led to significant progress in promoting sustainable long-term economic development in mainland Southeast Asia and fostering integrated sub-regional cooperation and capacity building;

(14) urges ASEAN to build capacity for the promotion and protection of human rights by ASEAN member states, and the implementation of related priorities, programs, and activities;

(15) urges ASEAN governments to engage directly with leaders of civil society and human rights, including advocates of religious freedom, victims of human rights abuses, and environmental groups, and to ensure these stakeholders have a voice in constructing public policy;

(16) encourages the President of the United States to communicate to ASEAN leaders the importance of promoting the rule of law and open and transparent government, strengthening civil society, and protecting human rights, including releasing political prisoners, ceasing politically motivated prosecutions and arbitrary killings, safeguarding freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech and expression;

(17) supports efforts by organizations in ASEAN that address corruption in the public and private sectors, enhance anti-bribery compliance, enforce bribery criminalization in the private sector, and build beneficial ownership transparency through the ASEAN-USAID PROSPECT project partnered with the South East Asia Parties Against Corruption (SEA-PAC);

(18) supports the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative as an example of a people-to-people partnership that provides skills, networks, and leadership training to a new generation who will create and fill jobs, foster cross-border cooperation and partnerships, and rise to solve the regional and global challenges of the future; and

(19) applauds the ASEAN governments that have fully upheld and implemented all United Nations Security Council resolutions and international agreements with respect to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and encourages all other ASEAN governments to do the same.

EASTERN EUROPEAN SECURITY ACT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2444 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title. The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2444) to authorize the Secretary of State to make direct loans under section 23 of the Arms Export Control Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2444) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF CAMEROON AND SEPARATIST ARMED GROUPS FROM THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST REGIONS TO END ALL VIOLENCE, RESPECT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL CAMEROONIANS, AND PURSUE A GENUINELY INCLUSIVE DIALOGUE TOWARD RESOLVING THE ONGOING CIVIL CONFLICT IN ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 684.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 684) calling on the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups from the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions to end all violence, respect the human rights of all Cameroonians, and pursue a genuinely inclusive dialogue toward resolving the ongoing civil conflict in Anglophone Cameroon.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the Risch amendment to the resolution be agreed to; that the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; that the Risch amendment to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2736), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: "That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns abuses committed by state security forces and armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, including extrajudicial killings and detentions, the use of force against civilians and nonviolent protesters, torture, rape, kidnappings, and other forms of violence against women, and violations of the freedoms of press, expression, and assembly;

(2) urges all parties to the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon, including political opposition groups, to—

(A) conclude and uphold an immediate ceasefire;

(B) guarantee unfettered humanitarian access and assistance to the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(C) exercise restraint and ensure that political protests are peaceful; and

(D) establish a credible process for an inclusive dialogue that includes all relevant stakeholders, including from civil society, to achieve a sustainable political solution that respects the rights and freedoms of all of the people of Cameroon;

(3) affirms that the United States Government continues to hold the Government of Cameroon responsible for safeguarding the safety, security, and constitutional rights of all citizens, regardless of their region of origin or the regions in which they reside, or their religious beliefs or political views;

(4) urges the Government of Cameroon to—

(A) initiate a credible, inclusive, good-faith effort to end the armed conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon by addressing the root causes of the crisis and grievances and seeking nonviolent solutions to resolve the conflict, including possibly involving an independent mediator in negotiations;

(B) follow through on initiatives developed to address the grievances that sparked the conflict, including the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development, and the National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Committee;

(C) fully implement recommendations of the Major National Dialogue held in late 2019;

(D) respect the rule of law and the constitutional rights of all Cameroonians, including members of the political opposition, civil society activists, and journalists;

(E) allow for credible, independent, and transparent investigations of all allegations of human rights abuses committed in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(F) release all political prisoners and journalists currently detained and immediately stop all arbitrary detention, torture, forced disappearances, deaths in custody, and inhumane prison conditions; and

(G) work with United States law enforcement to thoroughly investigate and prosecute those responsible for the murder of Charles Wescio;

(5) urges the Anglophone armed separatist groups to—

(A) engage peacefully with government officials to express grievances and engage in nonviolent efforts to resolve the conflict, including participation in a credible and inclusive dialogue, possibly involving an independent mediator;

(B) immediately cease human rights abuses, including killings of civilians, torture, kidnapping, and extortion;

(C) immediately end coercive and violent enforcement of the school boycott in the Northwest and Southwest regions and attacks on schools, teachers, and education officials, and allow for the peaceful and safe return of all students to class; and

(D) publicly condemn the illegal detention and kidnapping of civilians;

(6) urges the Department of State, Department of the Treasury, and United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to—

(A) consider imposing targeted sanctions on individual government and separatist leaders "responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of internationally recognized human rights";

(B) press the Government of Cameroon to provide unfettered humanitarian access to

vulnerable populations in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(C) support credible efforts to address the root causes of the conflict and to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation, possibly involving an independent mediator, and efforts to aid the economic recovery of and fight coronavirus in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(D) support humanitarian and development programming, including to meet immediate needs, advance nonviolent conflict resolution and reconciliation, promote economic recovery and development, support primary and secondary education, and strengthen democratic processes, including political decentralization, enshrined as a fundamental principle of state governance in the Constitution of Cameroon;

(E) continue to limit security assistance to Cameroon and ensure that United States training and equipment is not being used to facilitate human rights abuses in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(F) prioritize efforts to help develop and sustain effective, professional civilian oversight of law enforcement and security services in Cameroon to ensure they are held accountable for abuses; and

(G) engage in an ongoing effort to ensure that the crisis in the Anglophone regions is discussed in international fora, including the United Nations Security Council, that focus on urgent international diplomatic engagement and response; and

(7) urges members of the international community to—

(A) join in a strategic collective effort to pressure the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups, including through the use of available diplomatic and punitive tools, to immediately conclude and uphold a ceasefire, participate in an inclusive and meaningful dialogue to address the root causes of the conflict and pending grievances, and seek nonviolent solutions to the conflict, including by possibly involving an independent and credible international mediator;

(B) mobilize and coordinate funding for local and international organizations to provide humanitarian and development assistance, including to fight coronavirus, to communities affected by the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(C) leverage bilateral relationships to encourage key partners of Cameroon, particularly France, to help foster a peaceful resolution to the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, potentially with the involvement of an independent mediator, and implement a mutually agreed-upon program to address longstanding grievances and marginalization; and

(D) use regional and international fora, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the United Nations Security Council to—

(i) discuss the ongoing crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(ii) push for a cessation of violence, an expedient resolution, and the implementation of a mutually agreed-upon program for addressing the root causes and pending grievances; and

(iii) maintain calls for the investigation and prosecution of human rights abuses and crimes committed against civilians.

The resolution (S. Res. 684), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2737), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the preamble)

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas Cameroon is beset with multiple security challenges, including a Boko Haram insurgency in the Far North region, cross-border conflict and criminality by Central African militia groups to the east, and a civil war involving the Government of Cameroon and Anglophone separatist armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

Whereas the official actions and policies of the Francophone-dominated Government of Cameroon have repressed English-speaking Cameroonians politically and economically throughout the history of Cameroon, dating back to the reunification of British-administered Southern Cameroons and French Cameroun under a federal system in October 1961;

Whereas, in June 1972, following a national referendum, a new constitution was adopted that abolished the federal system, changed the name of the country from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to the United Republic of Cameroon, and gave additional powers to the presidency;

Whereas Paul Biya, the oldest head of state in Africa, has been the President of Cameroon since 1982, maintaining his grip on power by centralizing authority in the executive, undermining the Constitution of Cameroon, impeding democratic governance through corrupt practices, using security services to repress the opposition, and conducting elections marred by widespread irregularities and allegations of fraud;

Whereas key decentralization reforms enacted in the Constitution of Cameroon in 1996, which mandated the establishment of a decentralized unitary state, “equality of all citizens before the law”, the equal status of French and English as official languages, and the establishment of local authorities with “administrative and financial autonomy”, remain largely unrealized, though an enabling law was adopted in December 2019;

Whereas, throughout his tenure, President Biya has spent extended periods in Europe, pursued government policies exclusively benefitting the Francophone majority in Cameroon, and crippled many parastatals and private enterprises in the Northwest and Southwest regions, further marginalizing English-speaking Cameroonians;

Whereas, in October 2016, English-speaking lawyers, students, and teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon took to the streets to peacefully protest marginalization of English-speaking Cameroonians by the Government of Cameroon in the legal and education systems, as exemplified by the appointment of French-speaking judges and teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions and the publishing of important legislation solely in the French language;

Whereas those peaceful protests by English-speaking lawyers, students, and teachers were met with excessive force by the police and gendarmerie of Cameroon, which led to gross human rights violations, the arrest of lawyers, teachers, and Anglophone civic leaders, and their detention in the notorious Kondengui prison in Yaoundé;

Whereas, amid broader protests across the Northwest and Southwest regions demanding greater autonomy from the central government of Cameroon, on October 1, 2017, the 56th anniversary of the end of British trusteeship over Southern Cameroons, the Anglophone crisis escalated as separatist armed groups declared independence from Cameroon;

Whereas, in 2017, Anglophone separatist armed groups responded to the repressive and violent actions of the Government of Cameroon by targeting government officials and facilities as well as civilians and tradi-

tional leaders seen as sympathetic to the Government of Cameroon and brutally enforcing “ghost town operations” (general strikes) and school boycotts in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

Whereas lengthy government-imposed shutdowns of the internet and social media in the Northwest and Southwest regions, totaling 240 days between 2017 and 2018, had a devastating impact on the economies and educational institutions in the regions, undermined freedom of expression, prevented the free flow of information related to the conflict, and restricted the ability of local communities to interact and communicate;

Whereas the conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon has caused considerable instability and human suffering, with more than 3,000 deaths linked to the conflict as of 2018, with more recent figures difficult to ascertain due to lack of access to the Northwest and Southwest regions, and according to United Nations agencies, as of 2020, approximately 3,000,000 people in Cameroon are in need of humanitarian assistance, approximately 60,000 Cameroonian refugees have fled to Nigeria, and approximately 700,000 persons are internally displaced;

Whereas numerous credible reports from human rights monitors, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, have documented the excessive use of force by government security forces against Cameroonian civilians living in the Anglophone regions, including the burning of villages, the use of live ammunition against protestors, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, sexual abuse, and killing of civilians, including women, children, and the elderly;

Whereas the Department of State 2019 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Cameroon documented killings of civilians, kidnappings, abductions, and hostage taking, beatings, attacks on health workers and media, restrictions on movements of persons and goods, and use of child soldiers by armed Anglophone separatists;

Whereas the United Nations Children’s Fund estimates that more than 855,000 children are out of school due to the conflict, and the Department of State added Cameroon to the Child Soldiers Prevention Act List in the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report as a foreign government “identified during the previous year as having governmental armed forces, police, or other security forces, or government-supported armed groups that recruit or use child soldiers”;

Whereas United States citizen Charles Wesco was shot and killed near the town of Bamenda, Cameroon, on October 30, 2018, and, in November 2018, the Department of State stated, “In memory of American missionary Charles Wesco and all others who have lost their lives in the Anglophone Crisis, we urge all sides to end the violence and enter into broad-based reconciliatory dialogue without preconditions.”;

Whereas, in June 2019, the Government of Switzerland announced that, together with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, it was facilitating a dialogue between the Government of Cameroon and armed opposition groups to support a resolution of the Anglophone crisis;

Whereas, in September 2019, President Biya hastily announced a Major National Dialogue, chaired by Prime Minister Ngute from September 30 to October 4, 2019, in Yaoundé, “to examine the ways and means to respond to the deeply-held aspirations of the populations in the Northwest and Southwest”;

Whereas, though the Major National Dialogue led to some concessions by the Government of Cameroon on broader democratization issues, such as the release of some polit-

ical prisoners, including the leader of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, Maurice Kamto, and some of his associates after nine months of detention, it failed to bring separatist groups to the table;

Whereas, since the Major National Dialogue, the killing of civilians and other atrocities continue to be recorded across the Northwest and Southwest regions, including in towns and villages such as Babanki, Bamenda, Bangem, Buea, Mamfe, Muyuka, Pinyin, and Ngarbuh, and the Government of Cameroon recently has resumed its attack on the political opposition, placing Mr. Kamto under house arrest and detaining dozens of his supporters;

Whereas national and international outrage followed the massacre of at least 23 people, including 15 children and 2 pregnant women, by government security forces and allied militia on February 14, 2020, in Ngarbuh, Donga Mantung division, in the Northwest region, and a commission of inquiry established by Cameroonian authorities ultimately led to the arrest and charging of 3 soldiers for murder;

Whereas, on June 5, 2020, amidst increasing concern over attacks on freedom of the press and detention of journalists on politically motivated charges in recent years, Cameroon authorities confirmed that an Anglophone journalist covering the conflict, Samuel Ajiekah Abuwe, known as Wazizi, who was arrested in August 2019 and transferred to a military facility, died in custody shortly after his arrest, an acknowledgment that led to widespread condemnation and calls for an independent inquiry;

Whereas the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) of the Government of Cameroon, which has been accused of torture and extrajudicial killings and implicated in massacres like that of February 14, 2020, has received training and support from the United States, potentially in contravention of legal requirements that “no assistance shall be furnished . . . to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights”;

Whereas, in February 2019, the Department of State announced that it would withhold some security assistance to Cameroon, including equipment and training, citing credible allegations of human rights violations by state security forces and a lack of investigation, accountability, and transparency by the Government of Cameroon in response;

Whereas, on December 26, 2019, the United States terminated the designation of Cameroon as a beneficiary under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.) because “the Government of Cameroon currently engages in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”;

Whereas a European Parliament resolution, passed on April 18, 2019, urged inclusive political dialogue to resolve the Anglophone crisis, called for the conflict to be considered by the United Nations Security Council, and urged the European Union to “use the political leverage provided by development aid and other bilateral programmes to enhance the defense of human rights in Cameroon”;

Whereas France maintains considerable interests in Cameroon, including significant economic and security cooperation, but has not adequately used its influence to stem atrocities committed in the Anglophone regions or support stronger international action to seek resolution to the conflict;

Whereas the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Cameroon stated on January 24, 2019, that “Cameroon can no longer be a forgotten crisis; it needs to be high on our agenda”, and, on June 22, 2020, a group of former world leaders and 5 Nobel Peace Laureates called on the United

Nations Security Council and the United Nations Secretary-General, the African Union, the Commonwealth of Nations, and La Francophonie to “ensure that Cameroon’s Anglophone conflict is on the agenda of the forthcoming UN Security Council meeting and all UNOCA sessions before the UNSC”;

Whereas, on May 13, 2019, an Arria-formula meeting on the humanitarian crisis in Cameroon was held for the United Nations Security Council, but a formal meeting on the situation in Cameroon has not yet been placed on the United Nations Security Council agenda;

Whereas, on July 1, 2020, in Resolution 2532 (2020), the United Nations Security Council unanimously underlined its support of the appeal of the United Nations Secretary-General for a global ceasefire in all conflicts as the world battles the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas there is a significant Cameroonian diaspora in the United States, and Cameroon is a longstanding security partner and aid recipient of the United States, participating in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) led by the Department of State and in United States-supported efforts to counter Boko Haram and the Islamic State-West Africa, both of which have mounted terrorist operations in the Far North region of Cameroon since 2014: Now, therefore, be it

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

S. RES. 684

Whereas Cameroon is beset with multiple security challenges, including a Boko Haram insurgency in the Far North region, cross-border conflict and criminality by Central African militia groups to the east, and a civil war involving the Government of Cameroon and Anglophone separatist armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

Whereas the official actions and policies of the Francophone-dominated Government of Cameroon have repressed English-speaking Cameroonians politically and economically throughout the history of Cameroon, dating back to the reunification of British-administered Southern Cameroons and French Cameroon under a federal system in October 1961;

Whereas, in June 1972, following a national referendum, a new constitution was adopted that abolished the federal system, changed the name of the country from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to the United Republic of Cameroon, and gave additional powers to the presidency;

Whereas Paul Biya, the oldest head of state in Africa, has been the President of Cameroon since 1982, maintaining his grip on power by centralizing authority in the executive, undermining the Constitution of Cameroon, impeding democratic governance through corrupt practices, using security services to repress the opposition, and conducting elections marred by widespread irregularities and allegations of fraud;

Whereas key decentralization reforms enacted in the Constitution of Cameroon in 1996, which mandated the establishment of a decentralized unitary state, “equality of all citizens before the law”, the equal status of French and English as official languages, and the establishment of local authorities with “administrative and financial autonomy”, remain largely unrealized, though an enabling law was adopted in December 2019;

Whereas, throughout his tenure, President Biya has spent extended periods in Europe, pursued government policies exclusively benefiting the Francophone majority in Cameroon, and crippled many parastatals and private enterprises in the Northwest and

Southwest regions, further marginalizing English-speaking Cameroonians;

Whereas, in October 2016, English-speaking lawyers, students, and teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon took to the streets to peacefully protest marginalization of English-speaking Cameroonians by the Government of Cameroon in the legal and education systems, as exemplified by the appointment of French-speaking judges and teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions and the publishing of important legislation solely in the French language;

Whereas those peaceful protests by English-speaking lawyers, students, and teachers were met with excessive force by the police and gendarmerie of Cameroon, which led to gross human rights violations, the arrest of lawyers, teachers, and Anglophone civic leaders, and their detention in the notorious Kondengui prison in Yaoundé;

Whereas, amid broader protests across the Northwest and Southwest regions demanding greater autonomy from the central government of Cameroon, on October 1, 2017, the 56th anniversary of the end of British trusteeship over Southern Cameroons, the Anglophone crisis escalated as separatist armed groups declared independence from Cameroon;

Whereas, in 2017, Anglophone separatist armed groups responded to the repressive and violent actions of the Government of Cameroon by targeting government officials and facilities as well as civilians and traditional leaders seen as sympathetic to the Government of Cameroon and brutally enforcing “ghost town operations” (general strikes) and school boycotts in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

Whereas lengthy government-imposed shutdowns of the internet and social media in the Northwest and Southwest regions, totaling 240 days between 2017 and 2018, had a devastating impact on the economies and educational institutions in the regions, undermined freedom of expression, prevented the free flow of information related to the conflict, and restricted the ability of local communities to interact and communicate;

Whereas the conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon has caused considerable instability and human suffering, with more than 3,000 deaths linked to the conflict as of 2018, with more recent figures difficult to ascertain due to lack of access to the Northwest and Southwest regions, and according to United Nations agencies, as of 2020, approximately 3,000,000 people in Cameroon are in need of humanitarian assistance, approximately 60,000 Cameroonian refugees have fled to Nigeria, and approximately 700,000 persons are internally displaced;

Whereas numerous credible reports from human rights monitors, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, have documented the excessive use of force by government security forces against Cameroonian civilians living in the Anglophone regions, including the burning of villages, the use of live ammunition against protestors, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, sexual abuse, and killing of civilians, including women, children, and the elderly;

Whereas the Department of State 2019 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Cameroon documented killings of civilians, kidnappings, abductions, and hostage taking, beatings, attacks on health workers and media, restrictions on movements of persons and goods, and use of child soldiers by armed Anglophone separatists;

Whereas the United Nations Children’s Fund estimates that more than 855,000 chil-

dren are out of school due to the conflict, and the Department of State added Cameroon to the Child Soldiers Prevention Act List in the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report as a foreign government “identified during the previous year as having governmental armed forces, police, or other security forces, or government-supported armed groups that recruit or use child soldiers”;

Whereas United States citizen Charles Wesco was shot and killed near the town of Bamenda, Cameroon, on October 30, 2018, and, in November 2018, the Department of State stated, “In memory of American missionary Charles Wesco and all others who have lost their lives in the Anglophone Crisis, we urge all sides to end the violence and enter into broad-based reconciliatory dialogue without preconditions.”;

Whereas, in June 2019, the Government of Switzerland announced that, together with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, it was facilitating a dialogue between the Government of Cameroon and armed opposition groups to support a resolution of the Anglophone crisis;

Whereas, in September 2019, President Biya hastily announced a Major National Dialogue, chaired by Prime Minister Ngute from September 30 to October 4, 2019, in Yaoundé, “to examine the ways and means to respond to the deeply-held aspirations of the populations in the Northwest and Southwest”;

Whereas, though the Major National Dialogue led to some concessions by the Government of Cameroon on broader democratization issues, such as the release of some political prisoners, including the leader of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, Maurice Kamto, and some of his associates after nine months of detention, it failed to bring separatist groups to the table;

Whereas, since the Major National Dialogue, the killing of civilians and other atrocities continue to be recorded across the Northwest and Southwest regions, including in towns and villages such as Babanki, Bamenda, Bangem, Buea, Mamfe, Muyuka, Pinyin, and Ngarbuh, and the Government of Cameroon recently has resumed its attack on the political opposition, placing Mr. Kamto under house arrest and detaining dozens of his supporters;

Whereas national and international outrage followed the massacre of at least 23 people, including 15 children and 2 pregnant women, by government security forces and allied militia on February 14, 2020, in Ngarbuh, Donga Mantung division, in the Northwest region, and a commission of inquiry established by Cameroonian authorities ultimately led to the arrest and charging of 3 soldiers for murder;

Whereas, on June 5, 2020, amidst increasing concern over attacks on freedom of the press and detention of journalists on politically motivated charges in recent years, Cameroon authorities confirmed that an Anglophone journalist covering the conflict, Samuel Ajiekah Abuwe, known as Wazizi, who was arrested in August 2019 and transferred to a military facility, died in custody shortly after his arrest, an acknowledgment that led to widespread condemnation and calls for an independent inquiry;

Whereas the Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) of the Government of Cameroon, which has been accused of torture and extrajudicial killings and implicated in massacres like that of February 14, 2020, has received training and support from the United States, potentially in contravention of legal requirements that “no assistance shall be furnished . . . to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights”;

Whereas, in February 2019, the Department of State announced that it would withhold some security assistance to Cameroon, including equipment and training, citing credible allegations of human rights violations by state security forces and a lack of investigation, accountability, and transparency by the Government of Cameroon in response;

Whereas, on December 26, 2019, the United States terminated the designation of Cameroon as a beneficiary under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (19 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.) because “the Government of Cameroon currently engages in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”;

Whereas a European Parliament resolution, passed on April 18, 2019, urged inclusive political dialogue to resolve the Anglophone crisis, called for the conflict to be considered by the United Nations Security Council, and urged the European Union to “use the political leverage provided by development aid and other bilateral programmes to enhance the defense of human rights in Cameroon”;

Whereas France maintains considerable interests in Cameroon, including significant economic and security cooperation, but has not adequately used its influence to stem atrocities committed in the Anglophone regions or support stronger international action to seek resolution to the conflict;

Whereas the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Cameroon stated on January 24, 2019, that “Cameroon can no longer be a forgotten crisis; it needs to be high on our agenda”, and, on June 22, 2020, a group of former world leaders and 5 Nobel Peace Laureates called on the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Secretary-General, the African Union, the Commonwealth of Nations, and La Francophonie to “ensure that Cameroon’s Anglophone conflict is on the agenda of the forthcoming UN Security Council meeting and all UNOCA sessions before the UNSC”;

Whereas, on May 13, 2019, an Arria-formula meeting on the humanitarian crisis in Cameroon was held for the United Nations Security Council, but a formal meeting on the situation in Cameroon has not yet been placed on the United Nations Security Council agenda;

Whereas, on July 1, 2020, in Resolution 2532 (2020), the United Nations Security Council unanimously underlined its support of the appeal of the United Nations Secretary-General for a global ceasefire in all conflicts as the world battles the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas there is a significant Cameroonian diaspora in the United States, and Cameroon is a longstanding security partner and aid recipient of the United States, participating in the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) led by the Department of State and in United States-supported efforts to counter Boko Haram and the Islamic State-West Africa, both of which have mounted terrorist operations in the Far North region of Cameroon since 2014: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns abuses committed by state security forces and armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, including extrajudicial killings and detentions, the use of force against civilians and nonviolent protestors, torture, rape, kidnappings, and other forms of violence against women, and violations of the freedoms of press, expression, and assembly;

(2) urges all parties to the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon, including political opposition groups, to—

(A) conclude and uphold an immediate ceasefire;

(B) guarantee unfettered humanitarian access and assistance to the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(C) exercise restraint and ensure that political protests are peaceful; and

(D) establish a credible process for an inclusive dialogue that includes all relevant stakeholders, including from civil society, to achieve a sustainable political solution that respects the rights and freedoms of all of the people of Cameroon;

(3) affirms that the United States Government continues to hold the Government of Cameroon responsible for safeguarding the safety, security, and constitutional rights of all citizens, regardless of their region of origin or the regions in which they reside, or their religious beliefs or political views;

(4) urges the Government of Cameroon to—

(A) initiate a credible, inclusive, good-faith effort to end the armed conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon by addressing the root causes of the crisis and grievances and seeking nonviolent solutions to resolve the conflict, including possibly involving an independent mediator in negotiations;

(B) follow through on initiatives developed to address the grievances that sparked the conflict, including the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development, and the National Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Committee;

(C) fully implement recommendations of the Major National Dialogue held in late 2019;

(D) respect the rule of law and the constitutional rights of all Cameroonians, including members of the political opposition, civil society activists, and journalists;

(E) allow for credible, independent, and transparent investigations of all allegations of human rights abuses committed in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(F) release all political prisoners and journalists currently detained and immediately stop all arbitrary detention, torture, forced disappearances, deaths in custody, and inhumane prison conditions; and

(G) work with United States law enforcement to thoroughly investigate and prosecute those responsible for the murder of Charles Wesco;

(5) urges the Anglophone armed separatist groups to—

(A) engage peacefully with government officials to express grievances and engage in nonviolent efforts to resolve the conflict, including participation in a credible and inclusive dialogue, possibly involving an independent mediator;

(B) immediately cease human rights abuses, including killings of civilians, torture, kidnapping, and extortion;

(C) immediately end coercive and violent enforcement of the school boycott in the Northwest and Southwest regions and attacks on schools, teachers, and education officials, and allow for the peaceful and safe return of all students to class; and

(D) publicly condemn the illegal detention and kidnapping of civilians;

(6) urges the Department of State, Department of the Treasury, and United States Agency for International Development, in coordination with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to—

(A) consider imposing targeted sanctions on individual government and separatist leaders “responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of internationally recognized human rights”;

(B) press the Government of Cameroon to provide unfettered humanitarian access to vulnerable populations in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(C) support credible efforts to address the root causes of the conflict and to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation, possibly involving an independent mediator, and efforts to aid the economic recovery of and fight coronavirus in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(D) support humanitarian and development programming, including to meet immediate needs, advance nonviolent conflict resolution and reconciliation, promote economic recovery and development, support primary and secondary education, and strengthen democratic processes, including political decentralization, enshrined as a fundamental principle of state governance in the Constitution of Cameroon;

(E) continue to limit security assistance to Cameroon and ensure that United States training and equipment is not being used to facilitate human rights abuses in the Northwest and Southwest regions;

(F) prioritize efforts to help develop and sustain effective, professional civilian oversight of law enforcement and security services in Cameroon to ensure they are held accountable for abuses; and

(G) engage in an ongoing effort to ensure that the crisis in the Anglophone regions is discussed in international fora, including the United Nations Security Council, that focus on urgent international diplomatic engagement and response; and

(7) urges members of the international community to—

(A) join in a strategic collective effort to pressure the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups, including through the use of available diplomatic and punitive tools, to immediately conclude and uphold a ceasefire, participate in an inclusive and meaningful dialogue to address the root causes of the conflict and pending grievances, and seek nonviolent solutions to the conflict, including by possibly involving an independent and credible international mediator;

(B) mobilize and coordinate funding for local and international organizations to provide humanitarian and development assistance, including to fight coronavirus, to communities affected by the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(C) leverage bilateral relationships to encourage key partners of Cameroon, particularly France, to help foster a peaceful resolution to the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, potentially with the involvement of an independent mediator, and implement a mutually agreed-upon program to address longstanding grievances and marginalization; and

(D) use regional and international fora, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the United Nations Security Council to—

(i) discuss the ongoing crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon;

(ii) push for a cessation of violence, an expedient resolution, and the implementation of a mutually agreed-upon program for addressing the root causes and pending grievances; and

(iii) maintain calls for the investigation and prosecution of human rights abuses and crimes committed against civilians.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI SCHOLARSHIP ACT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4508 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4508) to expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 4508) was agreed to.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions through Sunday, January 3, 2021.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until Sunday, January 3, at 11:45 a.m., for a pro forma session only, with no business conducted; further, that when the Senate adjourns after the pro forma, that the Senate then reconvene at 12 noon on Sunday, January 3, pursuant to the Constitution; further, that following the prayer and pledge and

following the presentation of the Certificates of Election and the swearing-in of elected Members and the required live quorum, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021, AT 11:45 A.M.

Mr. BOOZMAN. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:12 p.m., adjourned until Sunday, January 3, 2021, at 11:45 a.m.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate upon reconsideration passed H.R. 6395, William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S7995–S8016

Measures Introduced: One bill and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 5086, and S.J. Res. 82. **Page S8005**

Measures Passed:

Senate Shared Employee Act: Senate passed S. 5086, to allow Senators, Senators-elect, committees of the Senate, leadership offices, and other offices of the Senate to share employees. **Pages S8005–09**

50 Years of ASEAN: Senate agreed to S. Res. 406, recognizing that for 50 years, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its ten members, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, have worked with the United States toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia, and expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States will continue to remain a strong, reliable, and active partner in the ASEAN region, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S8009–11**

Boozman (for Menendez) Amendment No. 2735, to make a technical correction to the preamble. **Pages S8010–11**

Eastern European Security Act: Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2444, to authorize the Secretary of State to make direct loans under section 23 of the Arms Export Control Act, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S8011–12**

Violence in Cameroon: Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 684, calling on the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed groups from the English-speaking Northwest and Southwest regions to end

all violence, respect the human rights of all Cameroonians, and pursue a genuinely inclusive dialogue toward resolving the ongoing civil conflict in Anglophone Cameroon, and the resolution was then agreed to, after agreeing to the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S8012–15**

Boozman (for Risch) Amendment No. 2736, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S8012**

Boozman (for Risch) Amendment No. 2737, to amend the preamble. **Pages S8012–14**

Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act: Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4508, to expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S8015–16**

Measures Considered:

JUSTICE Act: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 3985, to improve and reform policing practices, accountability, and transparency. **Page S7995**

Veto Messages:

William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act—Veto Message: By 81 yeas to 13 nays (Vote No. 292), two-thirds of the Senators voting, a quorum being present, having voted in the affirmative, H.R. 6395, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, upon reconsideration was passed, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding. **Pages S8000–01**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 80 yeas to 12 nays (Vote No. 291), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having

voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the veto message.

Page S8001

Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act—Veto Message: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the veto message to accompany S. 906, to improve the management of driftnet fishing, be considered as having been read and spread upon the Journal in full, and that the message be printed in the Congressional Record.

Pages S8001–02

Signing Authority—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Majority Leader, be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions through Sunday, January 3, 2021.

Page S8016

First Session of the 117th Congress—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 12 noon, on Sunday, January 3, 2021, pursuant to the Constitution, Senate present the certificates of election, swear-in elected Members, and proceed to the required live quorum.

Page S8016

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to the Constitution, the report of the veto of S. 906, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act; ordered to be printed in the Record, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk. (PM–63) **Pages S8004–05**

Messages from the House: **Page S8005**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S8005**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S8005**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S8005–06**

Additional Statements: **Page S8004**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S8006–08**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—292) **Page S8001**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 12 noon and adjourned at 4:12 p.m., until 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, January 3, 2021. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S8016.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet in Pro Forma session at 10 a.m. on Sunday, January 3, 2021.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

11:45 a.m., Sunday, January 3

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Sunday, January 3

Senate Chamber

Program for Sunday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

House Chamber

Program for Sunday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 10 a.m.



Congressional Record

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